

# gay COMMUNITY NEWS

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FOR SEVENTEEN YEARS, THE LESBIAN AND GAY WEEKLY

## Coalition goes to Church

*ACT UP and WHAM members disrupt mass at St. Patrick's to demonstrate against Cardinal O'Connor's role in opposing safe sex and abortion rights*

By Sydney Pokorny

NEW YORK — Approximately 4,500 AIDS and reproductive rights activists converged on St. Patrick's Cathedral Dec. 17 to protest the policies of the Catholic Church and Cardinal John O'Connor. Some 111 people were arrested, including 44 who were disrupting the mass inside the church. Reaction to the demonstration has been mixed, both within and outside of the gay community. Despite negative responses, however, the event was significant in its combination of the AIDS activist and pro-choice communities.

Some controversy has centered on the tactics used in the action, which was organized by ACT UP and the Women's Health Action Mobilization (WHAM). While 15 people chained themselves to pews inside the cathedral, 60 others staged die-ins both inside and outside the building, and one person attempted to interrupt the communion ritual by stating that the Church's policies on abortion and safe sex constituted murder.

While police officers were removing the protesters, O'Connor instructed parishioners to pray for those disturbing the mass. During the 10 a.m. mass, the thousands of other demonstrators formed a picket line outside of the church and affinity groups blocked traffic. An affinity group from WHAM, Operation Ridiculous, dressed in clown suits, piled into a taxi and drove up the Cathedral steps. They then climbed out of the taxi and sat on the church steps, blocking access to the church in a simulation of the tactics of the anti-abortion group, Operation Rescue.

There were reports of police brutality outside the church and some of those who were

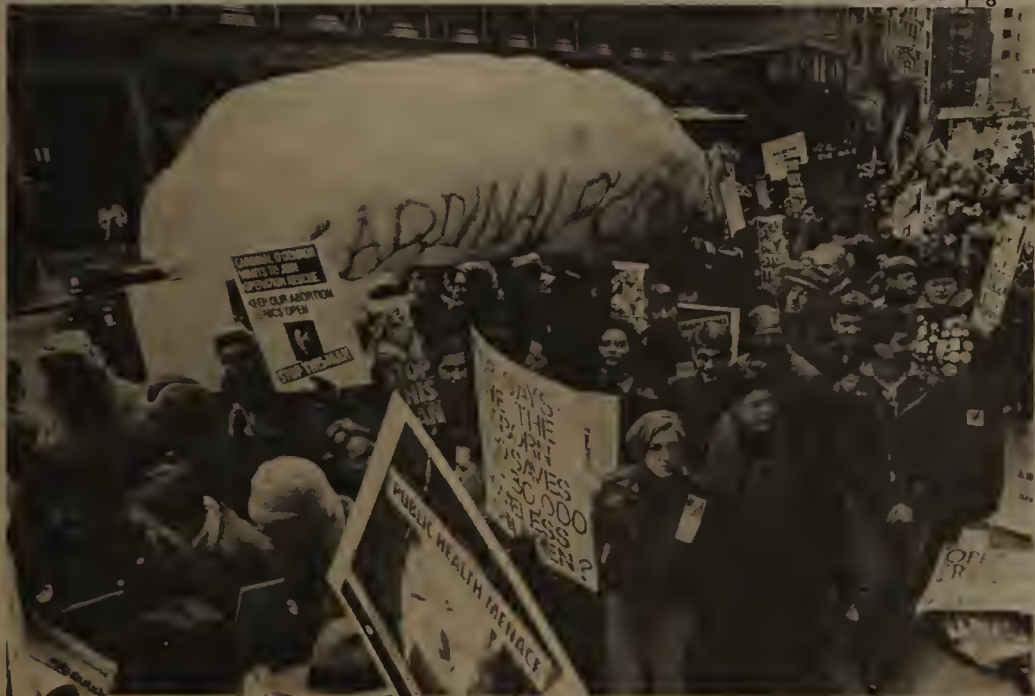
arrested were left handcuffed in a police van for several hours. However, all but three protesters were released within several hours.

Organizers said a major significance of the event was the union of the pro-choice and AIDS activist communities against an institution which unconstitutionally seeks to limit civil rights. Along with focussing on the Church, the protest targeted O'Connor who has been an outspoken foe of safe sex information, education, information on cleaning IV drug "works" and abortion rights.

O'Connor, who served on Ronald Reagan's HIV Commission, recently stated that those who teach about safe sex and offer instruction about cleaning works are effectively murderers because AIDS is a result of an aberrant lifestyle. He said that the only thing that will save people from AIDS is moral behavior. O'Connor has also supported the activities of Operation Rescue and the formation of a new order of nuns, the Sisters of Life, who would join the anti-abortion fight. Finally, O'Connor is the figurehead of a huge charity network, Catholic Charities, which has several city contracts.

The reaction to the protest has been mixed. The mainstream media and political figures have condemned the entire action, and Mayor-elect David Dinkins said that he did not support the action inside the church. Current Mayor Ed Koch, who attended the mass and was present during the protest, told the *New York Times*, "If you don't like the church, go out and find one you like — or start your own."

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Protesters wield a giant condom in the St. Patrick's demonstration, Dec. 10

## SISTERS OF YESTERYEAR: the LESBIAN HERSTORY ARCHIVE EXHIBIT



### DECEMBER BOOK REVIEW

Featuring Twice Blessed,  
a new Jewish lesbian/gay anthology,  
and Gloria Hull's Healing Heart

## Les/gay activists to head South this winter

*A young ACT UP chapter in Atlanta calls for back-to-back January actions aimed at sodomy laws and the CDC*

By Jennie McKnight

ATLANTA — Since they started acting up several years ago, AIDS activists have been noted for their audacity and ambition, among many other things. Going by names like ACT UP, ACT OUT, ACT NOW, groups of activists locally, nationally, and even internationally, have taken on governments, scientists, pharmaceutical companies, service organizations, even gay community institutions. They have shut down buildings, closed bridges, and wrought other havoc to make their point, usually with stunning visual accompaniment. In keeping with this tradition, the relatively small and relatively young Atlanta chapter of ACT UP has taken the bold move of calling for not one, but two national mobilizations in its hometown.

Formed in the wake of the Democratic presidential convention last year, ACT UP/Atlanta has "fewer than 5,000 members," according to the group's savvy, and cagey, media coordinator, Judy Siff. Out of discussions the group held in August and September came the idea to call for two national mobilizations a day apart. Giving itself only a few months to do national and local organizing, ACT UP/Atlanta called for a national action to repeal all sodomy laws on January 8, 1990. The next day, January 9, will be an action at the national Centers for Disease Control (CDC), which is based in Atlanta.

Siff said both actions seemed appropriate for ACT UP and for Atlanta. "We've been thinking in ACT UP about what sodomy laws mean, not only in terms of AIDS activism, but also as lesbians and gay men — although of course not all AIDS activists are lesbian or gay," said Siff. "[Sodomy laws] amount to the government's official criminalization of lesbian and gay sexuality." Not only is there the threat of arrest, according to Siff, but sodomy laws contribute to a social attitude towards les-

bians and gay men in which "gay bashing gets trivialized and gay parents are at risk for having their kids taken away from them."

Siff cited the case of Atlanta lesbian Leigh VanderEls, who lost custody of her son two years ago when a judge ruled that as a lesbian, she was an "unconvicted felon," and therefore an unfit mother. Georgia is also the home of the infamous *Hardwick v. Bowers* case, in which a gay man, Michael Hardwick, was arrested for sodomy when a cop walked into his bedroom while he was having sex with another man. The case ultimately went to the U.S. Supreme Court, which upheld the Georgia sodomy law in 1986.

More recently, a heterosexual man who was convicted of sodomy was released from prison when a judge ruled that the sodomy statute violates the privacy of married couples. The man, James Mosely, was accused of raping his wife, which he denied. In his defense Mosely said he had engaged in consensual oral sex with his wife, which caused the jury to bring back a guilty verdict on sodomy charges. (See *GCN*, Sept. 10, 1989.)

Sue Hyde, who coordinates sodomy law repeal efforts with the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF), said the Mosely case "is a perfect example of how a sodomy law is being narrowed and narrowed" to target gay men and lesbians. Hyde said she was excited by the mobilization in Atlanta, which will be one of the relatively rare instances of direct action on sodomy issues.

Siff also stressed the implications of sodomy laws — which exist in 26 states and the District of Columbia — for AIDS activists. "Since homosexuality is held to be criminal," she said, "then distributing safer sex materials like condoms becomes problematic. Schools, prisons, and other government institutions aren't likely to per-

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Quote of the week

“I think all the gays should get married and go live in California. It would bc another Sodom. Then when God decides to do away with them, as hc did in biblical times, they would all be in one place.”

— An Ann Landers reader from Milwaukee responding to the syndicated columnist’s poll about same-sex marriages. Landers solicited opinions from her readers about the legalization of same-sex marriages. Already, Landers reported, she has received over 55,000 responses which are running 2:1 against legalization. Ann herself, however, said that while she doesn’t favor same-sex marriage, she believes gay men and lesbians should receive the same financial benefits that “married” couples do. She added, “It seems there are no moderates when it comes to this issue. People are either passionately in favor of it or vehemently opposed. I must say again that I was appalled by the intolerance and viciousness of so many readers.”

Immigration waivers available for HIV positive people

SAN FRANCISCO — Under current immigration law, immigrants who are HIV seropositive are potentially facing exclusion from the amnesty process that would grant them permanent residence in the United States. ACT UP/San Francisco urges people to write to the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to protest this policy which scapegoats immigrants for “importing” AIDS.

Since access to many medical, social and educational services and legal protections are dependent upon having lawful resident status, it is particularly crucial that HIV-positive individuals be able to obtain that status.

The amnesty process has two phases. An amnesty applicant who is HIV-positive and has completed Phase I cannot apply for Phase II without a waiver. Some waivers to the current law are available under certain circumstances for people who are HIV positive, but the great majority of HIV-positive people remain underground. If those who have completed Phase I fail to apply for Phase II, they cannot begin the process again and will lose the chance to gain lawful resident status. At present, about 500 people nationwide have applied for the waiver and only a handful of initial decisions have been reached. Some have been waiting for as long as nine months.

ACT UP’s State and Federal Issues Committee urges people to send “respectful” letters to the INS “politely” asking that these waivers be granted to all applicants. Letters should be directed to the same INS bureaucrat who detained Dutch PWA Hans Verhoef last spring: Richard Norton, Associate Commissioner of Examinations, INS, 425 “I” Street, NW, Washington, D.C., 20536.

□ Jim Denison

Charges dropped in ‘fetal endangerment’ case

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — A case closely watched by reproductive rights activists ended inconclusively Dec. 4 when charges against a Waltham woman were dropped, according to the *Boston Globe*. Elizabeth Levey was charged July 15 with motor vehicle homicide after her eight-and-a-half month pregnancy ended in a still birth following a drunk driving accident. Although this case is closed, its conclusion does not resolve the question of whether pregnant women can be legally charged with a crime following harm to a fetus.

Both sides in the case agree that charges were dropped because the woman’s lawyer had raised questions about whether the fetus would have been viable if it had been delivered by Caesarian section immediately after the accident. In fact, Levey’s attorney indicated that Levey may be persuing a malpractice suit for her doctors’ failure to try to deliver the fetus immediately.

Reproductive rights advocates have

argued that bringing charges against a woman for the accidental death of a fetus is unfair. They argue that because of this artificial separation of a pregnant woman’s body, the state can bring charges against one part of a woman’s body on behalf of another.

The local mainstream press has chosen to present one point of view in its coverage: the *Boston Globe*’s Paul Langner referred to the fetus as “her female infant” on Dec. 5 and “her son” on July 16 and a *Boston Herald* headline referred to Levey as a “mom.”

□ Laura Briggs

Australians demonstrate for abortion rights

SYDNEY, Australia — Almost 100 demonstrators picketed the United States Consulate here Nov. 11 to protest the moves by the U.S. Senate to prohibit abortions by publicly-funded health facilities and to support the Nov. 12 abortion rights march in Washington D.C. Over 400 people demonstrated in Melbourne.

There have been similar attempts to limit access to abortion here and in England as well, so the protests in Australia were double actions. Representatives from the Gay Solidarity Group were present to show support for the women protesters.

Speakers at the Sydney picket included New South Wales parliamentarians Elisabeth Kirkby and Sandra Nori, television and radio personality Jane Singleton and Jenni Long from the International Women’s Day Collective.

□ Kendall Lovett



Gay groups join El Salvador solidarity protest, Nov. 25

Demonstrators protest violence in El Salvador

SYDNEY, Australia — About 1000 people held a march from the town hall here to the United States Consulate Nov. 25 in response to the recent events in El Salvador. Organized by the El Salvador Support Network, the march included members of the Gay Solidarity Group as well as other groups working in solidarity with Central America, the Caribbean and South America.

According to the Support Network, the U.S.-backed regime in El Salvador began aerial bombardment of the capital, San Salvador, and the provincial capital, San Miguel, Nov. 13. The bombardment was a retaliation against the uprising of the Salvadoran people and an action by the FMLN guerrillas which was sparked by the Oct. 31 bombing of the offices of the trade union confederation in which ten people were killed. In addition, the Network reports that six Jesuit priests and two women employees of the University of San Salvador were tortured and killed by the death squads.

The marchers called for condemnations of the killings by the Australian government, individuals and organizations and the end of U.S. military aid to the Salvadoran regime.

□ Kendall Lovett

Tenuous victory for political prisoners

WASHINGTON — On Nov. 3, the D.C. Court of Appeals issued a decision in the Resistance Conspiracy Case that severely weakens the government’s indictment against six progressive activists. The appeals court ruled that broad conspiracy charges could not be used against three of the defendants, Susan Rosenberg, Alan Berkman and Tim Blunk. The government is now deciding whether to go ahead with its case against

these three political activists and the Emergency Committee for Political Prisoners’ Rights is launching a letter writing campaign to Attorney General Richard Thornburgh demanding that the charges be dropped.

This case stems from a highly unusual and vindictive indictment unveiled by the U.S. Justice Department in May 1988 that charged Laura Whitehorn, Susan Rosenberg, Linda Evans, Marilyn Buck, Tim Blunk and Alan Berkman with “seeking to influence, change, and protest policies and practices of the United States government concerning various international and domestic matters through the use of violent and illegal means.” The six are charged with being part of a conspiracy to bomb four military and government buildings including the 1983 bombing of the U.S. Captitol, following the U.S. invasion of Grenada.

The Resistance Conspiracy Six (as they have come to be known) are 20-year veterans of the progressive movement in this country against racism, U.S. military intervention abroad, sexism and homophobia. Two of the defendants, Evans and Whitehorn, were in the Lexington High Security Unit, a behavior modification chamber for women political prisoners, that was recently shut down after a lawsuit by human rights groups.

The Emergency Committee for Political Prisoners’ Rights urges everyone who is opposed to the vindictive prosecution of these activists to write a letter today to the Attorney General demanding that the charges against Rosenberg, Berkman and Blunt be dropped. The defense committee believes that these letters can make a difference in the government’s decision on whether or not to proceed with its case against the three defendants.

Letters should be sent to: Attorney General Richard Thornburgh, U.S. Department of Justice, 10th and Constitution, N.W., Washington, D.C., 20530. Please reference the case as *U.S. v. Whitehorn*, Crim. Action No. 88-00145-04.

For more information about the Resistance Conspiracy Case, contact: the Emergency Committee, P.O. Box 28191, Washington, D.C., 20038.

□ Judy Greenspan

International dyke news

AMSTERDAM — The International Lesbian Information Service’s (ILIS) upgraded 24-page newsletter is now available and packed with activist information in English and Spanish. The Spring 1989 issue includes an interview with GALF, the lesbian group in Peru, news on Argentinian Dykes, an interview with a Nicaraguan lesbian, a story on Kowalski and Thompson, free contact ads for women and much more.

Subscriptions, including full membership, are 15 U.S. dollars for individuals and 60 U.S. dollars for organizations. Send by International Money Order to: ILIS, c/o COC, Rozenstraat 8, 1016 Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

□ John Hubert

Man indicted for anti-Semitic graffiti

MARBLEHEAD, Mass. — One person allegedly responsible for swastikas and other anti-Semitic graffiti on a temple and community center here was indicted on civil rights charges Nov. 29. The charges included destruction of a place of worship and damage to property for the purposes of intimidation. According to the *Boston Globe*, a warrant has been issued for the arrest of Daniel Dyer of Marblehead, and police are seeking criminal charges against two others believed to have been responsible for the graffiti.

The appearance last July 25 of spray-painted swastikas and other anti-Semitic messages on the Temple Emanuel and the North Shore Jewish Community Center motivated Marblehead residents to organize a unity march, create two task forces to counter bigotry, and draw up a statement against discrimination.

□ Laura Briggs

International Women’s Day videos sought

BOSTON — The sixth annual International Women’s Day Video Festival is seeking videotapes that “explore the theme of what women want as we head for a new century.” Videotapes must be submitted by January 1, 1990 and entries in languages other than English are welcomed (with written translations if possible).

In addition, this year women all over the world are encouraged to videotape sets of one-minute interviews, using the following guidelines: Choose a place where women gather; interview five women, one at a time; ask each woman to introduce herself and answer the question, “As a woman, what is the most important issue for you as we enter the 1990s?” These one-minute interviews will appear as a thread throughout the festival.

The festival is produced collaboratively by several Boston-area public access communities, but it represents the collaboration of women around the world. Interviews, excerpts from submitted tapes, and live segments are combined for a five-hour live cablecast on International Women’s Day in the Boston area. The festival is then distributed to public access cable TV channels throughout the U.S.

Tapes are accepted in any format (PAL and SECAM tapes in ¾” only). All submissions should include a return envelope and postage. For entry forms and more information, contact: International Women’s Day Video Festival, PO Box 176, Boston, MA 02130, USA, or call Abigal Norman, Somerville Community Access Television, at (617) 628-8826.

□ Kelly Gaines

Future mayor condemned for AIDS-phobic remark

SALEM, Mass. — Mayor-elect Neil J. Harrington registered a new low in de-prioritizing AIDS funding, when he said, “If you have AIDS, you’re going to die anyways,” during a Dec. 4 city council meeting here. According to the *Salem Evening News*, the comment came as a part of a debate on whether to appropriate funds for a new, part-time Health Department clerk to staff a tuberculosis clinic. During the discussion, it was noted that tuberculosis cases were increasing as a result of the rising number of AIDS cases.

Although Harrington apologized the next day for “offending” people, his remark generated condemnations by a number of people, including former U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop, who happened to be speaking in Salem three nights later, Dec. 7. “I’m not going to say anything about the mayor except to say one very simple thing,” said Koop. “AIDS is an incurable disease. But while you cannot cure, you can still care. Inasmuch as AIDS is a very debilitating disease, it requires a tremendous amount of effort on the part of caretakers to see that ordinary things that you and I take for granted are accomplished. I would be very much in favor of the strong effort to support those who are dying of AIDS.”

Larry Kessler, Executive Director of the AIDS Action Committee called the Mayor-elect’s comment “outrageous,” and noted that “We are all dying of something — that’s life.”

Harrington’s fellow city councilor Leonard O’Leary commented, “That’s like taking old people and saying they’re going to die anyway, so why care for them?”

Harrington, who is currently a councilor at large, recently agreed with a decision to spend \$5,000 for the Shriners band concert during Salem’s Heritage Days.

□ Laura Briggs



# Lesbian couple adopts child

*The women become the first same-sex couple to adopt a child with HIV*

By Jennie McKnight

SAN FRANCISCO — Erik Jessen-Pavlik, a two-year-old boy with HIV, became the legally recognized son of a lesbian couple in July. Millie Jessen and Susan Pavlik, who have raised the boy since he was five weeks old, are the first same-sex couple to jointly adopt a child with HIV. Erik is thought to be only the fifth child to be adopted simultaneously by both partners in a lesbian or gay couple.

A judge named both Jessen and Pavlik as Erik's adoptive parents, despite a formal objection to the joint adoption by the Alameda County Department of Social Services (DSS). According to Pavlik, the DSS objected to the joint adoption solely on the basis of its state-wide policy prohibiting adoption by unmarried couples. The policy — which ironically also protects lesbian and gay individuals from discrimination in adoptions — affects DSS recommendations in adoption cases, but is not legally binding.

"The policy is supposed to 'promote stability' for the child, which we all know marriage does," said Karen Strauss of the National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR), the legal organization that represented the couple. "We were able to make a case that a child deserves the security of two legally recognized adoptive parents.... Marital status is not relevant to quality of care and parenting."

Strauss said it is more common for one

partner in a lesbian or gay couple to adopt a child, and sometimes the other partner can become a co-adoptive parent later. Cases like Erik's, where both partners apply for adoption at the same time, are extremely rare, in part because of the restrictive policies like the one in California.

Pavlik and Jessen held a news conference in November to announce their victory. "Part of the purpose of the press conference was to let people know the policy [banning unmarried couples from joint adoption] is foolish," Pavlik told *GCN*. At the same press conference NCLR also announced the first joint adoptions by a gay male couple, identified only as Michael and Jonathan. In 1988 the men became the legally recognized parents of James, 7, and Carly, 5, a brother and sister.

Pavlik stressed that while she and Jessen wanted to jointly adopt Erik for both legal and symbolic reasons, their relationship to him has always been clear. "The joint adoption is a confirmation and affirmation by the legal community" said Pavlik. "We knew we were Erik's parents."

Pavlik, who is white, described the process by which Erik, who is Black, came to live with the couple. She said her partner, Jessen, who is Latina, was training to become a chaplain in an AIDS ward of a local hospital when she became aware of an

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# Abortion activists stop Operation Rescue

*As police stand by, pro-choice demonstrators keep a clinic open over OR's bodies*

By Laura Briggs

BROOKLINE, Mass. — Hundreds of pro-choice demonstrators held the line to prevent members of the anti-choice group Operation Rescue (OR) from blockading the doors to the Repro women's health clinic (which provides a range of services including abortions), representing a major shift in pro-choice strategy. "I was standing there, with my body, saying 'you won't go past me,'" said Sheila Parks of the Reproductive Rights Network (R2N2).

Local "clinic defense" demonstrations have been organized on Saturdays for nearly a year by a number of groups and organizations, but mostly by the Boston Chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW). In the past, pro-choice demonstrators in the Boston area have rallied alongside of Operation Rescue (OR), but have never before linked arms and created a wall of bodies to physically prevent OR members from reaching the clinic door.

Brookline police set up barricades extending from around the doorway of the Coolidge Corner clinic into the streets to maintain an open space in front of the health center's door. Abortion rights activists linked arms and formed double and triple lines to prevent OR members from crawling under the barricades to block the door to the clinic.

Ellen Convisser, President of Boston NOW described the early morning scenario. "This week, we were out before them. We had people at all four clinics [Gynecare, Preterm, Planned Parenthood, and Repro] in Boston and Brookline at 6 a.m. They [OR] started out in a church in Peabody, and [another] one south of Boston. We followed them to Brookline," Convisser told *GCN*.

When OR got to Brookline, they found pro-choice people ready to hold open access to the door. "We formed a line that they couldn't penetrate, but they didn't take it as definitive — so there was a lot of pushing, shoving, and kicking. It went on for seven hours. I'm still sore," said Marlene Fried of R2N2.

Women who had appointments at the clinic were escorted in by pro-choice activists, including Fried. "Getting a client through meant that you had to blast through OR bodies," Fried told *GCN*. She said that

"OR formed a second line, trying to force through the line abortion rights advocates had made. Once you got to the pro-choice line, they would move, but you had to push your way through OR to get there," she said. All the women who came to Repro for health care were able to get in.

Many lesbians and some gay men were present at Saturday's demonstration, as they have been throughout the reproductive rights movement. ACT UP/Boston's David Hamburger told *GCN* that for him, the connections between abortion rights and gay rights were obvious. "I think the issue that gets dealt with at the clinics is sex. They're out there saying that Jesus can make you asexual. You can't say that these two movements are not the same movement. OR proves it for us. The whole idea behind this pro-life agenda is that people should repress their sexuality, and that's what's causing the spread of HIV. They think that if you have sex, there should be some punishment for it, whether that's pregnancy or AIDS."

Not all the people who came to the demonstration left happy with the shift in strategy, and many came away with questions. Fried said that when the action was discussed at an R2N2 meeting, "Most people felt very mixed, on the one hand very exhilarated, like we had really done something. On the other hand, it felt like we were doing the police's work for them. This was street warfare. For myself, it gave me the creeps, though I felt what everyone else felt — a primitive sort of empowerment." Fried said that while she would probably go back if there was another demonstration, she felt that "there needs to be a lot of dialogue about what we want to have happen on the street."

NOW made the decision to escalate the confrontation by asking the people on its phone tree to be out in front of the clinics before OR was expected to be there. NOW's Convisser told *GCN* that they were willing to engage in dialogue with other groups about street strategy, saying that they "would love to see more groups involved in this. Street strategy has to be at the heart of all the work we do as activists. We'd love to share the burden." □



Carlton Lee and Larry Kessler confer during the commission's first meeting, Sept. 19

# AIDS commission releases early report

*Activists and advocates welcome the speedy findings, but say the analysis is old news*

By John Zeh

WASHINGTON — Calling for urgent action from the Bush Administration to fix a "singularly unresponsive" system of health care delivery and financing for persons with AIDS and HIV infection, the National AIDS Commission released its first report to the President and Congress — eight months ahead of schedule.

The report, issued here Dec. 6, cited major obstacles to a comprehensive AIDS policy including growing complacency towards the epidemic, lack of a national strategy to repair a faltering health care system and a federal drug plan that fails to address the impact of HIV's spread among IV drug users.

AIDS activists hailed the report's early appearance, even though they described its analysis as old news. "I'm glad it's out early," said Michael Meridian, head of the National Association of People With AIDS, "but I don't think it said anything we have not said already."

Larry Kessler, Executive Director of Boston's AIDS Action Committee and the only openly gay member of the Commission, told *GCN* that response to the report

has been "good nationwide, but not from the White House." Kessler said that the early report at least "moved AIDS from behind the stove to the back burner."

"They hit the nail right on the head when they described care as the single most important issue yet unresolved and unattempted at the federal level," said Tom Sheridan, director of public policy at AIDS Action Council. "But a year ago [we] met with the President and his transition team and laid out this issue."

Even Dr. David Rogers, the National AIDS Commission's Vice Chair, acknowledged on the *MacNeil-Lehrer News Hour* that the report's only new finding was "the tragedy's magnitude for so many people." According to statistics provided by AIDS organizations, the number of people with AIDS — over 112,000 since figures started being kept in 1981 — will double in only 12 months.

The Commission's report warns "There is a dangerous, perhaps even growing, complacency in our country toward an epidemic that many people want to believe is over."

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# Nicaraguan lesbian speaks in Boston

*'This is when my problem began — I knew I was in love with a woman'*

By Laura Briggs

BOSTON — A Nicaraguan lesbian offered an evening of storytelling, comparisons, and political analysis Dec. 5 at the Gay and Lesbian Community Center here.

Marta, whose real name cannot be used in print for fear of the consequences to her in her position in the government of Nicaragua, talked about a variety of subjects, including her coming out process and coming of age as a Sandinista *militante*. She also discussed the construction of "community," the complexities of gay identity in a machista society, and the evolution of a government which is taking small, halting steps toward full inclusion of lesbians and gay men.

The event, which was attended by a handful of people, was organized by and for two affinity groups, the Nicole Hollander Fan Club (a predominantly lesbian group) and the United Fruit Company (an affinity group of gay men). Both groups grew out of the Pledge of Resistance, a coalition of affinity groups and individuals against U.S. intervention in Central America. The translator failed to show up, due to a confusion about the location, so translation was done by members of the audience, primarily Janet Raphaelson. Marta's presence in Boston was arranged by a local lesbian who coordinated similar events in 10 cities across the U.S.

Marta began her remarks by explaining that while it is not possible to speak of a lesbian or gay "community" in Nicaragua, it is

accurate to speak of lesbians and gay men, although that can be problematic as well. For example, *macho* men who sleep with other men would never consider themselves homosexual because that word is reserved for *mariposas*, (faggots, queens, or, literally, butterflies). Many of them sleep with women to maintain the appearance of heterosexuality, but also have sex with *mariposas*. However, Marta said that some of the rigidity of this butch/femme construction of gay male sexuality is starting to give way and it is becoming easier to find men who are both masculine and gay.

The words for gay men and lesbians in Nicaragua and other places in Latin America are various: *mariposa*; *maricon*/*maricona*, which means faggot or dyke, but also carries the connotation of coward; *marimacha*, butch dyke; and *cochon*, for gay men, also meaning pig, or coward, and *cochona* for lesbians, suggesting a fear of men. (These latter terms are more common in Nicaragua than other places in Latin America.)

Marta said that while there is harassment of lesbians and gay men in Nicaragua, the government does not sanction homophobia. Violent gay-bashing does happen and it is more likely to be directed against gay men (*mariposas*) than lesbians. Marta pointed out that men, however, will be quite vulgar to a butch dyke. "Society will forgive you if you're a woman, because you are 'just a

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62 Berkeley Street  
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## Over-emphasis on safer sex ed among gay white men

Dear *GCN*:

The endless, boundless creativity of those whose careers depend on the marketing and fundraising efforts of well-established AIDS Service Organizations (ASOs) is awesome — and dangerous. I refer to the sound-bite concept espoused by a GMHC (Gay Men's Health Crisis/NY) functionary, Michael De Mayo, in the "Hindsights" space of last week's *GCN*: "relapse." "Relapse" is a new AIDS education term referring to the abandonment of safe sex practices by gay men who have been using them. Had I not heard this sales pitch from an AAC (AIDS Action Committee) fundraiser (read: FUNDRAISER, not safe-sex educator) this week, I might not have noticed a trend. But there is a trend, and it has to do with "repackaging" gay-white-male safe sex education as a critical, and therefore fundable, aspect of ASO service provision.

The concept of "relapse" comes directly from the "substance-abuse" field, a lucrative wing of the AIDS-as-career empire. With a general consensus at hand that safer sex is indeed the way of the world among gay men, safe sex educators, who provide no useful service to the great numbers of those who are sick and in desperate need of services and financial aid, are promulgating the notion that "education" should still be a focus of the ASO's at a time when their jobs are in peril. Prevention efforts *are* desperately needed — in communities of color and among people who do not garner great attention from elegant ASO types. Hence: "relapse." That we should all keep in mind that the epidemic is *not* over — that we must all assess our risk and act accordingly — is a given. That ASO careerists should conjure up a new mental health term to market and fundraise for their own career survival at a time when *PWA clients are going hungry and homeless* is an atrocity.

This is not to say that De Mayo does not raise important points, because he does. There still is a general lack of support for sex-positive safe-sex lifestyles. In my view, what we need to do is break away, once and for all, from the desire to "imitate" heterosexual models in our sex (lights go out, one dominant person jumps on and humps less dominant person — you know: BORING) and learn to celebrate *truly gay* sexuality. Among men, this means not being afraid to *see* ourselves and our partners and enjoy orgasm and all that leads up to it as a *visual*, as well as a sensual feast. But these are fine points. Safe sex education is *desperately* needed in other high-risk groups. But, more importantly, the PEOPLE WITH AIDS who are the most important and needy clients of ASOs get shortchanged when education, "program development," and other such Volvo-era machinations suck up needed funding and energy.

There are currently TWO HUNDRED clients of Boston's AAC with AIDS who are on the waiting list for HUD Section-8 housing subsidies — people who are fighting for a minimal degree of quality of life while they also fight for their lives with AIDS. Fussing over how high the risk of oral sex without orgasm is or why some fools (read: FOOLS) want to get fucked without a condom when people are faced with AIDS and homelessness — in bone-chilling temperatures — is *ridiculous*.

Sex should be hot and safe and abundant — but it should NOT cost money. Safe sex education in the gay male community should be a *fait accompli* at this point — so that desperately needed funding can pay rents and buy food for needy PWAs. But if people STILL CAN'T FIGURE OUT SAFE SEX AS A WAY OF BECOMING FREER, HOTTER THAN EVER, I suggest a series of fundraising events that directly benefit needy PWAs with housing and food assistance while providing safe-sex entertainment for men: Joe Gage film retrospectives, Cum-shot contests, Jack-off parties. Those who insist on getting humped in the dark without a condom can stay at home, and those who GET IT can help make safe sex even hotter and more popular — while actually helping those who are living with AIDS survive, rather than paying fundraising experts and "educators" who wish it was still 1984.

Sincerely,  
Steve Rose  
For the AIDS Watchdog Group  
Boston, Mass.

Juana Maria Paz  
Lomas Verdes  
Bayamon, Puerto Rico

**Gay Community News** is produced by a collective dedicated to providing coverage of events and news in the interest of gay and lesbian liberation. The collective consists of a paid staff of ten, a general membership of volunteers, and a board of directors elected by the membership.

Opinions reflected in "editorials" represent the views of the paid staff collective. Signed letters and columns represent the views and opinions of the authors only. We encourage all readers to send us comments, criticism, and information, and to volunteer and become members.

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## STOP AIDS

### Stop stupid stickers

Dear *GCN*:

Hi, just when you think you've seen everything something really comes along to shock you! I took the sticker below off a car parked outside the University of Puerto Rico in Bayamon last week. Personally I've never seen anything like it. It bears the name of no organization but it is in English so it's probably from the U.S.

If you print it maybe we can track it down to get it stopped. You may print my name and city with this letter.

Juana Maria Paz  
Lomas Verdes  
Bayamon, Puerto Rico

# See the back page

## for more info

## on GCN's

## fabulous

# gift subscription offer!



## Unaware of our addictions

Dear *GCN*:

I have been a reader of your paper for many years. I am curious about the fact that so many lesbian and gay folks out there have the same disease (addiction) and yet are not aware of the symptoms of this destroyer of lives, loves and self.

I am in control at this point of drugs and alcohol, but it is not easy, I don't want people to believe that just because I am locked up I can't drink or do drugs. That's just a fairy tale of the system. I have the choice. The disease of addiction is just as deadly as AIDS or cancer, and takes many lives besides those of the user, in car accidents and other crime-related casualties.

We need to teach ourselves and our loved ones and children not only about sex but also about drugs and alcohol and how to live with them as well as without them.

Laura Greener  
1401 State School Rd  
Gatesville, TX 76599

## NYU Law Alum unite

Dear *GCN*:

Are you a lawyer? Did you graduate from the New York University School of Law? Do you know people who did? If so, you'll be interested to know that a new organization is forming this year: the NYU Law Lesbian and Gay Alumnae/i Network. In addition to getting back in touch with old friends and meeting new ones, our goals are to advocate for the interests of lesbians and gays within the NYU community and to support and educate one another in our efforts on behalf of the lesbian and gay community at large.

Some specific concerns include: Dean John Sexton's recent denial of married student housing privileges to a gay couple; the total absence of lesbian and gay input into the admissions and faculty recruitment processes; sponsorship of lesbian, gay and AIDS-related legal scholarship; combatting lesbian and gay invisibility within the legal profession; throwing intensely wild parties for one another; and anything else we can think of.

On December 5, 1989, the Lesbian and Gay Law Students of NYU hosted a kick-off holiday cocktail party in the D'Agostino Great Hall. Even if you couldn't make the party, please contact us so we can put you on our mailing list. Contact Jim Mirro at (212) 254-0514 or Cathy Edalgo and Michael Sieradzki at (212) 674-3713.

Love you all!

Jim Mirro '90, Alumnae/i Liaison  
Cathy Edalgo '91, Co-chair  
Michael Sieradzki '91, Co-Chair  
NYU Lesbian and Gay Law Students

## Disobeying an order to piss lands transsexual in isolation

Dear *GCN*:

I'm a 37 year old Black/Hispanic prisoner in New York. At the age of 10 I was diagnosed as Gender Dysphoric. I was chemically castrated 10 years later as a result of intensive estrogen therapy, and have been classified as a pre-op transsexual since then.

In 1987 the prison hospital diagnosed me as HIV positive. One year later I required extensive hospitalization and came close to death as a result of AIDS related infections. I'm currently being treated with AZT and sepran. The entire prison population and staff are aware of my physical condition. I am ostracized by a significant number of them. I recognize that such behavior is based on a combination of fear, ignorance and hate.

This past November I was preparing to go outside to the recreational area for a couple of hours when an officer pulled me into the hospital area for a 'routine' urine inspection. He said that if I could not urinate within the next few hours I would be charged with refusing to comply with an order and punished. In spite of my inability to eat much due to my depleted physical condition, I drank as much as I could and still was unable to urinate within the prescribed time. Instead of giving me more time the officer wrote a disciplinary report on me.

At the disciplinary hearing I told the committee that the medication may have contributed to my inability to urinate but they referred to the Physicians Desk Reference, where it says 'frequent urinating' under AZT, and I was sentenced to 90 days 'keep-

lock' in order 'to deter other inmates from disobeying an order to urinate.'

This charge is truly specious and unjust. I would like to know if there is anything someone reading this letter can do to help me fight this charge. I have no experience in the law. A phone call or letter to Superintendent Hoke (Box 338, Napanoch, NY 12458) may suffice. There is definitely an indication of retaliation in this case. I have never received a misconduct for possessing or using drugs.

Thank you for your help,  
Edward Inman  
87A 7765  
Box 338  
Napanoch, NY 12458

## Look in your hearts and make a friend

Dear *GCN*:

Hello! I'm a gay prisoner in a straight redneck prison. I am writing hoping you will print this in *GCN*.

As you know we gays and lesbians have been labeled all our lives due to our sexual preference. We have been beaten on, threatened, abused, fired from our jobs, etc, etc. However, we gay and lesbian prisoners face more abuse than you could even imagine. We're prisoners but we're still human and we're still gay and lesbian. The dangers that we face you on the outside could avoid most of the time. When I say we have no rights in here that means None. But you could help more than you realize and this is just an example. You could write a prisoner. Just by doing this you would really help ease the pain gays and lesbians suffer.

You don't have to think or feel that by writing it has to turn into a relationship or you will have to send money. Just by your being there for us would be a great help for us, and would also make these prison authorities ease up on us a little knowing we have someone on the outside.

It saddens me that we gays and lesbians don't stick together more than we do. Well, I hope this letter is printed and that you gays and lesbians out there really look in your hearts and make a friend with a gay or lesbian prisoner. We need you.

John Gibbs  
D-49364 (4A-8C-101-U)  
Box 1902-A  
Tehachapi, CA 93561

## Amazed at Yale's turmoil

Dear *GCN*:

Your story (November 5-11 issue) of arrest and turmoil at the Yale Gay Studies Conference has brought amazed disbelief here. Enclose the program of our 1963 Mid-winter Institute 3-day event, 9th such public ONE Institute "gay studies" program with distinguished speakers and papers. Many more of these annual events have been held without incident since then.

Comparable highly publicized programs have been held locally on the campuses of University of California, L.A., University of Southern California and even California State University in suburban Dominguez Hills with full academic approval and support. There has at no time been any adverse reaction, picketing or whatever.

No matter how distinguished the announced speakers the cultural and intellectual climate you have reported gives irrefutable evidence of social dissonance between Town & Gown which seen from this distance can only be termed anomalous in the world of today.

Very truly yours,  
W. Dorr Legg  
ONE Institute  
Los Angeles, Calif.

## Yale's upholding free expression is pretense

[*GCN received a copy of this open letter to Yale University's President, Benno Schmidt, Jr. — Ed.*]

As the keynote speaker for the third annual conference sponsored by the Lesbian and Gay Studies Center at Yale last weekend, I am writing you to express my outrage at the homophobic violence unleashed against us on Friday evening, violence initiated by the Yale police and escalated by the New Haven police. In addition, I write to protest the Yale administration's wholly inadequate response to this violence. When we gathered for that response on Saturday morning, we were treated to a series of insults: first, that you did not consider

homophobic violence against us as requiring your presence; second, that the very people who suffered or witnessed this violence were told that "the facts were not yet known"; and finally, that the violence itself could not even be named. We were told merely that Yale University supports freedom of expression — a vague and easy claim — and that an impartial investigation would take place.

Gay men and lesbians have very little reason to have faith in "impartiality" in these matters, especially after having experienced the atmosphere at Yale. Throughout the weekend, conference members were subjected to homophobic remarks wherever we went. My own speech Saturday night was deliberately disrupted by students squealing their car tires outside the Whitney Humanities Center. Since apparently no one in an official capacity at Yale attended my speech, I want to reconstruct for you some of my opening remarks.

Participants in the Lesbian and Gay Studies Conference this past weekend included some of the most distinguished and committed gay and lesbian scholars and activists working today. Among them were members of the international community of people fighting against the AIDS epidemic, including people living with AIDS. It is my opinion that until all of us are satisfied with Yale University's support of our work, including substantial commitments to the Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies, we should no longer lend credibility to Yale's pretense of upholding free expression by our presence at Yale. The University's claim to respect free speech will remain hollow until

you, as president, issue an unambiguous public statement condemning all forms of homophobia — named as such. This condemnation must also extend to labeling representations of our sexuality as obscene. Moreover, we expect a statement of positive support for all forms of expression by gay men and lesbians of our sexualities.

I was deeply impressed and moved by the Yale students and faculty who organized and participated in the Lesbian and Gay Studies conference. They deserve all the credit for the success of the conference — success in the face of the university's variously expressed contempt for us. In the past you have belittled the strong presence at Yale of a gay and lesbian community by catering to, rather than countering, homophobic charges and fears. In light of that injury, and of the added insults of this past weekend, it is now imperative that your gay and lesbian scholars be given not only protection in a clearly homophobic environment, but every encouragement to carry on with their courageous work. This is not to be accomplished by your occasional chats with an openly gay professor, but rather by meeting directly with the full gay constituency at Yale to hear their grievances and to follow their guidance, and by taking a strong public position.

The international community of lesbian and gay scholars and activists will not let this matter rest until the demands issued at the conference and appended here are met to the letter.

Yours truly,  
Douglas Crimp  
New Haven, Conn.

# Safer Sex and Drug Use

*GCN* offers these guidelines for all of us who are making decisions about sex and drug use in the midst of the AIDS epidemic.

HIV is a virus widely thought to be a cause of AIDS. The highest concentrations of HIV are found in blood and semen. So it's important to avoid any way in which HIV-infected blood or semen can get from one person's body into another person's bloodstream.

• **Fucking (anal and vaginal) without a condom and sharing needles account for almost all the documented cases of HIV transmission.**

• Oral sex without a condom or dental dam accounts for a very few documented cases of HIV transmission.

• Other ways of transmitting HIV that have not been documented but which could be theoretically risky include: fisting, finger fucking, rimming, deep kissing, sharing uncleaned dildos. The theory here is that any way HIV-infected bodily fluids get from one person into another involves risk. For example, HIV could be transmitted if a person with a cut on their hand fistfucked their partner and caused bleeding in their rectum or vagina.

## How to Play Safer

Only you can decide what risks you are willing to take. Some people use safer sex practices with all their partners. Other people make decisions about the risks they are willing to take based on their own and their partners' sexual and drug use history and/or HIV status. People also make decisions based on how comfortable they feel negotiating safer sex in any particular situation. If you and your partner have not talked about past practices and/or HIV status, don't make assumptions. (For example, many lesbians have had unprotected intercourse with a man in the last ten years.)

• **Use a condom when fucking.** On the condoms, use water-based lubricants like KY. Oil-based lubricants like Crisco, Vaseline, and baby oil may make condoms break.

• **Use a condom when sucking dick if your partner is going to come in your mouth.** If HIV-infected cum or pre-cum gets in your mouth, it may get in your bloodstream through cuts in your gums or sores in your mouth.

• **Use dental dams (latex squares) when going down on a woman** if she is having her period or has a vaginal infection. Menstrual blood and secretions from vaginal infections have more HIV than healthy vaginal secretions or urine. No information has been gathered about the concentration of HIV in "female ejaculate."

• **Use latex gloves for fisting or finger-fucking** if you have any sores or cuts on your hands.

• Keep semen and blood (including menstrual blood and blood drawn from piercing, cutting or shaving) out of your vagina, anus, mouth, or breaks in your skin.

• If you share dildos, vibrators or other sex toys, use a new condom each time, or clean toys with hydrogen peroxide or soap and water.

• Alternative insemination may put you at risk. Discuss this risk with potential donors or sperm banks.

• Massage, hugging, dirty talk, role-playing, masturbation (solo, with a partner, in a group) and other activities that don't let blood or semen into your bloodstream are safe.

• Alcohol, poppers or other drugs may lower your ability to make good decisions. Many people have reported that they have been unable to maintain safer sex practices after getting high.

• Good nutrition, lots of rest, exercise and nonabuse of alcohol and other drugs may help you fight all illnesses, including AIDS.

## Intravenous Drug Use

• **Don't share works** (needles, syringes, droppers, spoons, cottons or cookers)!

• If you must share or re-use works, clean them before and after **each** injection as follows: dip needle and works into bleach, draw up and release three times, dip needle and works into fresh water, draw up and release three times. In an emergency, rubbing alcohol or vodka can be used instead of bleach. Or you can boil works that aren't plastic in water for at least 15 minutes. (Use a fresh solution each time you clean your works.)

## Resource phone numbers

National AIDS Hotline: 1 (800) 342-7514  
AIDS Action Committee (AAC) Boston: 1 (800) 235-2331  
Latino AIDS Hotline (bilingual), Boston: (617) 262-7248  
AIDS Action Committee (AAC) IV Drug Use Taskforce, Boston: (617) 437-4200  
Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC), New York: (212) 807-6655  
National Minority AIDS Council (NMAC), Washington, D.C.: (202) 544-1076  
Women's AIDS Network, San Francisco: (415) 864-4376



# OBITUARIES



## Kevin M. George

BOSTON — Kevin Michael George, age 29, died from AIDS-related complications on December 3, 1989, at New England Deaconess Hospital in the presence of friends and family. A native of Boston, Kevin had a lifetime commitment to community activism and a selfless devotion to the needs of others.

Born in the Jamaica Plain section of Boston, Kevin attended Boston English High School, where he was president of the Student Council and a student member of the Boston School Committee. While in high school, Kevin co-founded Boston's Committee for Gay Youth and was a member of Lambda.

Kevin attended the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and received a B.S. in 1982. While a college student, Kevin served as president of the Peoples Gay Alliance and as a member of the Chancellor's Committee on Civility. He also worked as a resident assistant and was an active participant in student government.

After graduating, Kevin worked as a manager of several clubs and restaurants in both Provincetown and Fort Lauderdale and became a licensed real estate broker. While working in Provincetown, he first became active in Alcoholics Anonymous and remained active in that organization until his death.

For eight years, Kevin was a student of the Indo-American Karate School. He achieved the rank of Third Degree of White Dragon and was a member of the Goldens, the governing body of the Poekoelan Association. In October 1987, when Kevin moved to Boston's South End, he founded the Boston Poekoelan Association, a school of self-defense, and taught classes aimed at both the gay and straight community, as well as classes for children.

While living in Boston, Kevin was a contributor to the book *You Can Do Something About AIDS*, served on the Board of Directors of the Living Center, and was featured in *100 Legends*, a collection of art featuring people with AIDS. In addition, under Kevin's leadership, the Monday night dinner program for people with AIDS grew from a small, informal gathering to a weekly program that serves over 100 people at AIDS Action Committee headquarters. Kevin recently received awards from the AIDS Action Committee and the Massachusetts Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus recognizing his work in support of people with AIDS.

In addition to Kevin's many political and community activities, he maintained a lifelong interest in science fiction books and comic books, amassing a vast collection of both.

Kevin George is survived by his parents, William and Margaret George, of Jamaica Plain, his brothers, David, Terrence and Robert, also of Jamaica Plain, his sister Christine Ellis of Milton and her children, Stephen, Michelle, and Bradford, as well as by his countless friends.

A Memorial Service for Kevin will be held on Sunday, January 28 at 2:00 p.m. at the Arlington Street Church in Boston, followed by a reception in his honor at Club Cafe. Donations in Kevin's memory may be made to the AIDS Action Committee or to the New England Deaconess Hospital AIDS Research Fund. □

## Alan Bowne

PETALUMA, Calif. — Alan Bowne, playwright, author and screenwriter, died of AIDS on November 26 at his home in Petaluma.

Bowne, whose full name was William Alan Bowne, came to the public's attention when his play *Forty-Deuce* opened at the Perry Street Theater in October of 1981. Detailing one night in the lives of teenaged street hustlers and their Johns, *Forty-Deuce* shocked off-off-Broadway theatergoers. Part Jean Genet, part John Rechy, and part Brecht, the play was not only a relentless examination of the sex and drug lives of the characters, but was also a scathing attack on consumerism and a world in which a dead boy-hustler is as marketable as any new product. But the strength of the play was Bowne's recreation of street language into a theatrical form which fell somewhere between Elizabethan stage talk and speed raps. *Forty-Deuce*, which starred Kevin Bacon and Orson Bean, won several awards including a Villager Award as Best Play of 1981 and an Obie for Bacon's performance.

Bowne adapted his play for the screen and in 1983 Andy Warhol protégé Paul Morrissey made it into a film. During this time, Bowne also had several other plays produced, including *The Beany and Cecil Show*, *Sharon and Billy* and *Beirut*. The last piece received a great deal of attention since it dealt, in a futuristic/metaphysical setting, with AIDS. Besides being one of the first plays to address the health crisis, *Beirut* viewed AIDS (which the play never mentioned by name) in a political context. In 1985, Bowne worked with Paul Morrissey on *Mixed Blood*, a violent comedy about street gangs which starred famed Brazilian actress Marília Pera. Two years later Bowne wrote *Spike of Bensonhurst*, which Morrissey also directed. Both *Mixed Blood* and *Spike of Bensonhurst* received good critical notices and although they had modest theatrical runs, they became extraordinarily popular as videos.

Just before his death, Bowne had completed a novel, *Wally Wonderstruck*.

Besides parents and a sister in California, Bowne leaves many friends in both the theater and film communities of Manhattan.

□ Michael Bronski



## Donald Bresnahan

OGUNQUIT, Maine — On November 8, Donald S. Bresnahan died of complications resulting from AIDS. He was 30 years old.

Donald was a resident of the South End for several years before moving here in 1986, where he was an owner of Maine Property Management and Ogunquit River Properties. He was a graduate of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and had worked in hotel and restaurant management in Boston, before coming to Maine.

Donald is survived by his mother, Marilyn Bresnahan Wolf and his step-father, Paul Wolf, his brothers, David M. of Salt Lake City and Daniel J. of Worcester, and his sister, Dianne Davis, also of the Worcester area. Since August, Donald had been in the care of his family, in Westboro, Massachusetts. He died at his family's home.

Donald will be deeply missed by his many friends in Boston, Worcester, and Maine. Donald wanted his friends to show continued support for organizations that help persons with AIDS, and wanted in particular to express his gratitude to AIDS Project Worcester, 305 Shrewsbury Street, and the AIDS Project, 22 Monument Square, Portland, Maine, which were directly involved in helping him.

□ Jay DeMartine

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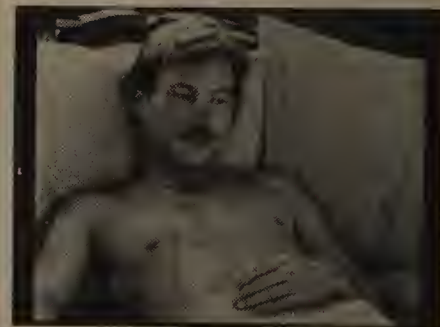
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Gloria Hull

## A poet's revolution of life

*Deep, sweet and real: Gloria Hull has seen her demons and come out the other side*

### Healing Heart

Gloria T. Hull  
Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press, Inc.,  
Latham, NY, 1989  
\$8.95 paper, 140pp.

Reviewed by Terri L. Jewell

Gloria Hull, best known as a Black Feminist literary critic, expands and personalizes her examination of creative thought in her first collection of poetry, *Healing Heart*. Currently Professor of Women's Studies and Literature at the University of California at Santa Cruz, Hull has published four other books, including the landmark *All the Women Are White, All the Blacks Men, But Some of Us Are Brave: Black Women's Studies*, co-edited with Patricia Bell Scott and Barbara Smith (Feminist Press, 1982). The 68 poems in *Healing Heart*, representing work written from 1973 to 1988, open doors into the poet's past from childhood to her psycho-spiritual rebirth in her forties.

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Reviewed by Donald Stone p.11

The book is divided into five sections, each part delivering intimate feelings and concrete events in honest, clear language. Hull's first and last poems celebrate the first revolution of her life. She describes the circumstances of her conception in "Roots—#1"

Asthmatic Madam Blue  
...made her close back room  
a trysting place for mother  
in her salad days

There my father seeded me  
his last Louisiana spring

Then she closes this circle in the final lines of "8-5-88":

I know  
today — for sure —  
I am somebody's mother

These greens I'm cooking  
can nourish you

Within this sphere, then, the reader is allowed to follow Hull's growth both as an individual and as a poet. She moves from pieces that are affecting, though merely descriptive, to "conversations," and finally, to strong affirmations spoken in the first person.

The conversations that the poet shares with us are acute in their clarity. She talks to a woman lover in "From Running Come Touch," saying,

You told me about  
your fear of penetrations —  
men's maleness, people pushing  
all thrusts warded you off  
with weapons  
your mother handed you  
through pain

We listen to the questions presented by a young girl on abortion in "Her/Story":

How the thing hurt  
the hanger and the packing  
trying to brave wait the days  
until it all came out  
in the dormitory toilet

What seems as a preface to this poem is "Young Girls' Blues" which chronicles how so many girls are socialized into total confusion and/or disdain about sex.

Each section of *Healing Heart* has its own flavor of conversation, several pieces speaking to the influence of African-American literary women, past and present. In "Acknowledgement: Three Graces," Hull presents Alice Dunbar-Nelson, Georgia Douglas Johnson and Angelina Weld Grimke. Audre Lorde, Zora Neale Hurston and Toni Morrison, among others, are also addressed as sisters and mothers in the poetry. In fact, the names of many renowned Black people are announced quite casually which makes them seem even more like family. In this way, Hull is declaring that survival depends on realizing the continuity of experience and love.

The section that splits the book into two halves seems to act as catalyst for Hull's self-awakening. Called "Jamaica Journal," this

Continued on page 11

## The triangle within the Star of David

*Twice Blessed asks the straight Jewish community to fully integrate lesbian and gay Jews*

**Twice Blessed: On Being Lesbian, Gay and Jewish**  
Edited by Christie Balka and Andy Rose  
Beacon Press, Boston, 1989  
\$24.95 cloth, 305pp.

Reviewed by Maida Tilchen

Trying to write a review of *Twice Blessed* has me spouting off in hundreds of directions. I feel that just about everything I have experienced or cared about as a Jewish lesbian needs to be shared, explained, acknowledged, and argued, by both me and my three communities: the Jewish one, the lesbian/gay one, and the Jewish lesbian/gay one. Feeling this way helps me see the difficult task that faced the editors of *Twice Blessed*: how to fit a history of thousands of years, millions of people, and countless experiences and opinions into three hundred pages. This is only the third book on this topic, and the first two — *Nice Jewish Girls: A Lesbian Anthology* (Persephone Press, 1982; Beacon, 1989) and *The Tribe of Dina* (Sinister Wisdom, 1986; Beacon 1989) — didn't include men. I can see that the editors had to make some clear-cut choices to narrow the goals and scope of this book. The result is a valid and well-done work, but may disappoint those who do not agree with the priorities the editors set.

What were these priorities? Editors Christie Balka and Andy Rose have chosen to target their book primarily at members of the straight community in order to convince them to fully integrate lesbian and gay Jews and to acknowledge our existence in the liturgy. Secondly, they ask for Jewish families to fully accept their lesbian and gay rela-

biens/gays in Jewish recorded history. Rebecca T. Alpert, a Reconstructionist rabbi, discusses the infamous *Leviticus 18:22* ("Do not lie with a male as one lies with a woman; it is an abomination"). In non-academic language, she explains when in Jewish ritual this line is stated, and goes on to explain some ways in which Jews have chosen to respond to Biblical admonitions and this one in particular. For those not well versed in Judaism, the realization that Jews need not and have not taken the Torah at face value may be very liberating. I think sometimes it's hard for Jews to put their awareness of *Leviticus 18:22* together with their knowledge that Judaism consists of a huge body of thousands of years of Torah interpretation. The challenge seems to be to convince homophobic Jews that this line is as open to interpretation as any other line in the Torah.

"Honoring Our Relationships" goes into a more personal realm. It covers validating the relationships of lesbians and gay men; the acceptance of children of lesbian parents (regrettably, nothing about gay fathers); and the attitude of straight parents toward a gay son. I liked Rabbi Linda Holtzman's article best because it seemed more real than the ideal situations presented in other pieces. Her folks aren't writing any articles about how worth-it it is to have a lesbian daughter, and living a Jewish life is not one of her lover's goals. I'm glad the editors of this book were able to find parents who resolved their conflicts and a gay male couple who held a "commitment ceremony" — canopy, wine glass and all — but Holtzman's more typical experiences were refreshing.

"Creating Lesbian and Gay Jewish Com-



Christie Balka



Andy Rose

tives, and somewhat lastly, the book strongly encourages lesbian and gay Jews to express our Judaism, particularly through the network of lesbian and gay Jewish congregations. Their ideal reader would be a straight Jew who wants to learn more, or a lesbian or gay Jew who has been unable to integrate Judaism with gay sexuality.

The book has five sections. "Naming Ourselves" presents brief autobiographical accounts of five representative lesbian/gay Jews, including a gay man, an Orthodox lesbian, a deaf gay man, a working class lesbian, and an Arab Jewish lesbian. I was particularly enlightened by Alan D. Zamochnick's account of Jewish attitudes toward people with disabilities. Jewish law categorizes people who are deaf as an inferior group, and restricts their rights and responsibilities. On the other hand, several Biblical heroes were disabled, such as Isaac, who was blind; and Moses, who had a speech disability.

"Reclaiming Our History" looks at les-

bian/gay synagogue movement and the World Congress of Lesbian and Gay Jewish Organizations. Aliza Maggid goes into some of the problems these groups have encountered, such as external homophobia in Israel; and internal friction between lesbians and gay men over the use of nonsexist language and the role of women in worship services. Throughout *Twice Blessed*, the value of these congregations is repeatedly affirmed. They have helped countless Jews find a home among both Jews and lesbians/gays, and it is mostly through their efforts that mainstream Jewish organizations have begun to consider the existence and needs of lesbian/gay Jews.

Evelyn Torton Beck, the editor of *Nice Jewish Girls*, attempts to explain the Jewish lesbian feminist movement that peaked in the mid-'80s. In contrast to the formal organization of which Aliza Maggid writes, Beck has the impossible task of trying to

Continued on page 8



# Bring on the whodunits

Finale beats out Gothic romance any day

Finale: Short Stories of Mystery and Suspense  
Michael Nava, ed.  
Alyson Publications, Inc., Boston 1989  
\$8.95 paper, 287pp.

Reviewed by Gordon Gottlieb  
People who have never read mystery stories tend to be as dismissive towards them as I am towards gothic romances. Without ever having deigned to read more than a page, we still manage to perch atop our condescending soapboxes, denouncing formulaic plots, cliches dressed up in characters' clothing, and improbable coincidences (not to mention dubious politics). This solemn condemnation of either genre is ultimately pointless, however, since the diehard fan can concur completely and still love to read the stuff.

And so I enjoyed *Finale*, a collection of eight short stories, even as I recognized the range of quality among the selection. Mystery stories have been around for over a century, but the subgenre of lesbian/gay whodunits spans a mere 20 years or so, not long enough to have produced more than a handful of talented writers. Editor Michael Nava has assembled some of them and invited some less experienced writers along as well.

Not surprising for such a convention-riddled genre, the best stories in *Finale* were penned by the two veteran authors — Katherine Forrest and Phil Andros. In "Jessie," Forrest displays her talents for conversation, interior monologues and descriptive passages as Jessie, the lesbian sheriff in a small California town, tracks down the murderer of her (male) friend and mentor. Detective Kate Delafield, the protagonist in two of Forrest's earlier books, makes a guest appearance.

Andros, known for his daring tales of the hustler's life written during the '50s and '60s, contributes "Death and the Tattoo," in which his stud-cum-dick investigates



Michael Nava

the mysterious deaths of some of his tricks. In the best mystery tradition, editor Nava's "Street People" has a surprise ending that works. Not so in some of the other stories where the supernatural or the overly-cute replace the more standard (and in my opinion preferable) whodunit approach. Only afterwards did I look at the book's subtitle which should have given it away; "short stories of mystery and suspense" can mean we don't find elegant dodges or deft stumbling blocks, no did-you-catch-that-all-important-clue? I prefer whodunits to suspense, but even the weakest of *Finale*'s selections are better than some damn gothic romance any day. □

*Gordon Gottlieb has been gay and reading mysteries most of his life, although he's not sure there is a correlation.*

## Twice Blessed

Continued from page 7  
chronicle a movement that included thousands of Jewish lesbians and feminists, but left behind a sporadic and personal record at most. Beck doesn't try; what she does do is make some general observations about the value of that movement and its limits. I was really grateful to her for pointing out some of its chief discoveries and probably the reason for its dissolution: "differences that divide Jews also marked our groups, no matter how small our groupings were." Aliza Maggid discussed how the lesbian/gay synagogue movement has survived despite differences among members; Beck talks about how the Jewish lesbian movement broke apart. While I agree with Beck's thesis, I wish there had been more about how this significant movement has affected the lives of many lesbians.

I found Eric. E. Rofes' account of being Jewish in the lesbian/gay community and being a gay man in the Jewish community one of the most moving personal pieces in *Twice Blessed*. However, I thought it was inadequate to cover the whole topic of anti-Semitism in the lesbian/gay community. The crucial issue, which was a major impetus for the formation of Jewish lesbian groups, is discussed at length in *Nice Jewish Girls*. I think it was downplayed here because *Twice Blessed* centers more on gay/straight than on gay/gay issues.

Yoel Kahn's article about incorporating lesbian/gay Jewish existence into the liturgy is a must-see for anyone involved with planning worship services. He shows that Judaism can and must do more to integrate lesbians/gays than make us feel welcome in the room: through such changes as saying "lover" instead of "husband or wife," gay relationships can be recognized within prayers. This is truly the bottom line for acceptance.

The final section, "Reaching Out: Lesbian and Gay Jews in the Jewish Community," contains two striking articles. Rabbi Janet Marder, a straight woman, was chosen by the congregation of a lesbian/gay synagogue to be their rabbi in 1983. She started out knowing mostly negative stereotypes of gays, but over the years through her experience and through an analysis of her

own cultural biases, she has moved to a position of full acceptance. As a rabbi, she tried to find justification in Jewish belief and law that what she was experiencing was true. She finally decided to break with the law, "without apology, without attempts to unearth a minority legal opinion somewhere that supports our position. Reverence for tradition is no virtue when it promotes injustice and human suffering."

In stark contrast, "La Escondida," a lesbian rabbi who chooses to stay closeted while serving a mainstream congregation. She says she does so in order to not be marginalized professionally, able only to get jobs serving lesbian/gay congregations. Whatever one's profession, every lesbian/gay person knows this painful choice, but reading such an honest account of its consequences is agonizing. The most powerful statement in this article is that straight people also lose when their homophobia causes lesbian/gay people to hide ourselves.

Those lesbian/gay Jews who have been out and about either in the Jewish lesbian movement or the rare but extant "mainstream" congregations which are truly lesbian/gay-supportive may feel inadequately recognized by this book. But, if it reaches its intended straight audience, *Twice Blessed* may serve an important role in improving the status of lesbian/gay Jews within organized Judaism, and help everyone with their families. I believe it will also help many lesbian/gay people to come out as Jews, and many Jews to come out as lesbian/gay people. □

*Maida Tilchen is a member of Havurat Shalom in Somerville, Mass., where she had an open lesbian adult Bat Mitzvah in 1986, and now occasionally leads Friday night services.*

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Shay Youngblood

## The power of Black women together

*Shay Youngblood's marvelous extended family of stories*

### The Big Mama Stories

Shay Youngblood

Firebrand Books, Ithaca, New York, 1989  
\$8.95 paper, \$18.95 cloth, 109pp.

Reviewed by Terri L. Jewell

Shay Youngblood, Black Lesbian Feminist author and playwright, presents a marvelous first collection of short stories, *The Big Mama Stories*. Her play, "Shakin' the Mess Outta Misery," sprang from these stories and had a successful run in Atlanta last year. Born in Columbus, Georgia, Youngblood's mother died, leaving the two-year-old Shay to be raised by her grandmother — the "Big Mama" of the collection — and six other women. In the book, Youngblood describes "Big Mama" as an "old Black woman who had a gift for seeing with her heart." All 12 stories are indelibly linked to form an extended family that inhabits a community called Princeton, Georgia.

The story, "Born With Religion," introduces the cast of characters and the atmosphere of the book. The reader learns about the young girl through whose eyes all events are interpreted. Youngblood wastes no time displaying her incredible ability to create a persona within a sentence or two. In this story, Aunt Vi has a medical problem which the women of the #2 Mission Prayer Circle assemble to cure:

Miss Mary always showed up first. She looked like a skinny black gypsy. She had six gold teeth right in front, wore big gold earrings and bright-colored scarves over her finger-length plaits that stuck out from under. Then came Miss Alice, a light-skinned sister with the bluest eyes and hair I'd ever seen. Then Miss Tom came in. She was a mannish looking woman with a mustache.

On and on these wonderful people parade, their peculiarities woven with fondness and skill. As this story develops, the reader realizes the power of women together, the warmth of them, and the great love Youngblood has for the traditions and language of Black people.

The hilarity and candor of *The Big Mama Stories* peak in such pieces as "Miss Rosa's Monkey," in which aspinster mortician

lives in a house full of embalmed animals dressed in children's clothing — and in "Maggie Agatha Christmas St. Clair." In the latter, a two-way flim-flam results in a woman's salvation, but only through the kindness and unconditional love of Big Mama.

An incestuous relationship between sisters is the subject of one of the more unsettling stories, "Funny Women." The title is a colloquialism often applied to Lesbians by Blacks in the South. Here the reader is treated to the full embodiment of Miss Tom:

She had silver sideburns, thick eyebrows that almost met across the top of her face, dark black eyes that could see through almost anything, and a silver mustache, like a man.

Miss Tom grew up to age five with six brothers before she acquired a baby sister, Juliette:

It was clear to be a white man's chile, most probably Mr. Boone who Mama kept house for. Mama called her Juliette after Mr. Boone's dead wife.

Miss Tom and Juliette, having had to sleep in the same bed for nine years, became lovers, but were separated after their mother's death. Juliette was taken away by relatives and Miss Tom passed as a male in order to get training for gainful employment. Many years later, Miss Tom and Juliette were reunited under tragic circumstances and the most ironic turn of events. The piece ends on a note which insinuates continuation at a later time and in another book, let's hope.

Again, it is this key sense of continuity that makes it so difficult to put the book down once one begins to read. There is also a pervasive magical quality to the work. For instance, in "Snuff Dippers," the women relish the bitter wisdom that they have gained through living. After one incident of bigotry, the African spirits are called upon to set things right. "Watch the Spirit Move" gives a lively view of the path of karma when guided by the gifted hands of Sister Cora, a fortune teller.

Men play a peripheral role in the majority of *The Big Mama Stories*, so the book is

Continued on page 13

## On the edge in the '80s

*Sex and obsession are the primary motivators in Sam D'Allesandro's Zombie Pit but beneath its surface beats a rock and roll heart*

### The Zombie Pit

Sam D'Allesandro

The Crossing Press, Freedom, Calif., 1989  
\$6.95 paper, 124pp.

Reviewed by Christopher Wittke

Yesterday I was leafing through the new 12-inch dance records at a music supermarket jam-packed with holiday shoppers. Not feeling economically connected to the hustle and bustle of all these gift seekers (broke again), I thought maybe I'd discover a new treat for my feet that would take me away from the gritty realities of life.

And there it was...a brand new release by one of the two or three recording artists who had brought me the most escapist pleasure during the past ten years. From the earliest part of this decade when he funkied in relative obscurity to his days as a superstar and the release of his *Batman* soundtrack last summer, I could almost always count on Prince. His new single is a remix of a song from *Batman* retitled "The Scandalous Sex Suite." *Oh yes*, I thought, as visions of naughty lyrics and a sexy duet with Kim Basinger danced in my head. I could imagine the hot bass line and Prince-brand synthesizers that, as ever, tapped a direct line to my libido. Glancing at the back cover I noticed one of those cryptic little messages that Prince likes to send out to his fans, only this time it wasn't so cryptic. "The '80s are over, the time has come 4 monogamy and trust."

*Fuck you, Prince*, I thought. *What the hell decade did you just come through?* As someone who has spent ten years reconciling the fact that the '70s are over and realizing that the '80s push for "monogamy" was nothing more than a sham that didn't really "solve" anything, I found it hard to believe

that someone who had always appeared a pop visionary could suddenly get knocked out of sync. But it had happened to David Bowie, too.

I realized I'd have to look elsewhere for reflections of real life — and resigned myself to the fact that another rock and roll hero had bitten the dust.

Sam D'Allesandro could have been a rock



Sam D'Allesandro

and roll hero. A West Coast scenester who loved not-quite-mainstream music as much as the next queen (if the next queen happened to be me), D'Allesandro wrote poetry and poetic prose with a hallucinogenic intensity shot through with gritty, hardcore, sexy-as-hell reality. He liked the music of the Dead Kennedys, and Patti Smith, and The Mutants, and Bowie. The pulse of this rock and roll is always just below the surface of even his most obscurely-written short stories (many of which have been collected in *The Zombie Pit*). And a lot of this music

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## Broken hearts, messed up families, and new beginnings

*A fine collection of lesbian stories from Pat Roth Schwartz*

### The Names of the Moons of Mars

Patricia Roth Schwartz

New Victoria Publishers, Norwich, Vermont, 1989  
\$8.95 paper, 192pp.

Reviewed by Nan Donald

Reading *The Names of the Moons of Mars* is like tearing into a box of chocolate creams: every piece may not be to your taste, you'll undoubtedly

live, not to mention, love, in the Boston area. How many books have you read that wax sentimental about Somerville?

*The Names of the Moons of Mars* is a frequently somber book, flecked through with optimism and humor. Schwartz examines with dignity and tenderness the battles within and without of women, especially lesbians; of families, created and biological, and the cages and freedom they can provide; and of psychic emptiness "as vast as the human heart can contain." These are short stories, not small stories. Many of the most though provoking are under ten pages



Patricia Roth Schwartz

discover personal favorites, and overall it presents a rare treat.

Author Pat Roth Schwartz is a lesbian, psychotherapist, native West Virginian, and current resident of Somerville, Massachusetts — all elements which creep into the patchwork of this, her first book of collected short fiction. Although of general appeal to readers everywhere, the book holds special interest to those of us who work and

long.

Flight, self acceptance, and new beginnings are recurring themes. Indeed, the underlying premise of this collection is succinctly stated near the end of "Feather," the opening story: "I realize then that any one of us can only run so far so long. Eventually we've got to turn and face what we're running from."

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# A literate journal of pedophilia

‘Sooner rather than later the editors will have to engage with radical feminist critiques’

## PAIDIKA: The Journal of Paedophilia

Issues 1-4, Summer 1987-Autumn 1988  
Available from Paidika, Postbox 22630, 1100  
DC Amsterdam Z.O. The Netherlands  
\$58/four issue sub. or \$15 single issue  
(seamail)

Reviewed by Roger Moody

If the odds are stacked heavily against any new gay publishing venture, they must run off the board when it comes to pedophilia. Unless my memory serves me ill, it is all of ten years since anyone had the brashness to deliver a journal on the subject. The *International Journal of Greek Love* collapsed after two issues; the *NAMBLA Journal* hasn't emerged for some years. The British magazine *Understanding Pedophilia* took a nose dive in the '70s, when the Pedophile Information Exchange was crushed by the State. And *minor Problems* was about reframing adult-child relationships in general, even though the gutter-snipe press in Britain persisted in seeing it as a child molester's vehicle, and it only got reviewed in the gay press.

Now here comes *Paidika*, boldly proclaiming itself as *The Journal of Paedophilia* — four issues out on schedule and more planned. Tasteful, literate, scrupulously edited, it seems destined straight for the library boxes or psychiatric shelves. In any other era, no doubt, that's where it would end up: feeding the medical mythology rather than the movement. But precisely because the movement is under siege and disoriented, *Paidika* is already providing a focal point for a remarkable diversity of people. The editorial board boasts not only those old Dutch familiars, Doctors Brongersma and Bernard (without whom no foray into the fields of man/boy love would ever feel complete), but Dan Tsang, founder of the sorely missed *Gay Insurgent*, Hans Hafkamp, who edits the Dutch *Gay Agenda*, John DeCecco, editor of the U.S. *Journal of Homosexuality*, and two Dutch gay activists with solid reputations on their home soil — Gert Hekma and Thijs Maasen.

On the other hand, the editors keep a studiously low profile, the journal is depressingly expensive, and its presentation is deliberately conservative. Add to that the absence of women or youth, German, French, Italian, English or Third World participants on the editorial board and this hardly seems a vehicle for active proselytizing — either among lesbians, feminists and gays at large, or other radical groups. Let there be no mistake — *Paidika* firmly sets out to address “the politics of oppression.” Expressed in issue No.1 is its editors' unambiguous contention that oppression of paedophilia “...is part of the larger repression of sexuality, and that this repression in general represents an irrational expression of authority in government.” Yet its apparent flirtation with academic respectability sits uneasily alongside its self-declared role as a sexual provocateur. (I'm reminded of a witty aside thrown in my direction several years ago by Leonard Peltier's lawyer, having to argue that his Native American client was innocent under a legal system for which he felt only contempt, “I've a foot in both camps, a marvelous position for getting screwed.” Having said that (and it needs to be said), *Paidika*'s material triumphs over its present form. We can forget the unfortunate title (with its resonances both of bacchanalia and cold showers); forget too the sub-head “Journal of Paedophilia” (as if we were to be lectured on some discrete scientific discipline, rather than seduced into a world of little-known wonderment.)

For *Paidika* is resoundingly concerned with inter-generational gay relationships, and knows what it's talking about. Its recovery of our gay/boy loving histories is impeccable, with substantial new insights into John Henry Kackay (*Paidika* No.3), the early twentieth century Christian teacher/poet, William de Merode (No.1) and the remarkable Alsatian painter, Charles Filiger (I'd never heard of him either). The inter-

views, which will clearly be a staple in *Paidika*'s diet, are always stimulating, sometimes enlightening. Rene Scherer — worthy successor to, and collaborator with, Michel Foucault and Guy Hocquenhém — can always be relied on to get the adrenaline flowing (No.2); John DeCecco is worth reading (No.3) and Monica Pieterse, a Dutch jurist (lawyer), hardly less so (No.1).

Certainly there is some awkward, rather self-conscious posturing — such as an attempt in *Paidika* No.1 to get Jesus of Nazareth on its side. And if Maarten Schild's examination (No.3) of Arabic pederasty was intended to inveigle us away from racial and sexual stereotypes, by my book it completely failed.

But these lacunae are more than made up for by pieces such as H.J. Roethof's stirring condemnation of all types of fundamentalism (No.4), Lawrence A. Stanley's analysis of hysteria over child pornography/molestation (the best short essay in this tendentious field that I've yet read: No.2), and a marvelous discovery: the diaries of Lewis Thompson, an emigre to India earlier in this century, whose philosophical writings are now quite widely read. I have re-read the extracts from these diaries published in *Paidika* I several times, enormously excited by their richness and sensuality. (There are thousands more such entries, I understand, lying in a box somewhere in rural England and I hope the editors of *Paidika* unearth many more of them in the near future.)

Just as my grandmother knew damn well how to suck eggs (a talent she passed on to her grandchildren with great aplomb) so the editors of this journal know what it takes to roll out a progressive treatise defending gay intergenerational sexuality. There's certainly little any reviewer could teach them about the historical or moral aspects. Hopefully, too, they will begin to look at the issue outside the narrow geographical perspective characteristic of their current editorial board. Sooner, rather than later, they will have to seriously engage with radical feminist critiques of man/boy sexual relationships which have to do not simply with abuses of consent or institutionalized power, but the perpetuation of male principles: so far, there is little indication that the editors are aware of the debate. They will also have to decide how far to include young peoples' demands and experiences within their brief (so far there has been only one article specifically addressed to the growing, rather the grown-up.)

I hope the editors of *Paidika* soon change the title: clearly it doesn't fool the prurient hacks of Customs and Excise. I hope they will commission feminist critiques. I hope they manage to reduce the cover price, as they deservedly increase sales. I hope they don't just stir, but thoroughly shake the bullshit surrounding the whole issue of intergenerational gay sex.

Above all, I hope they don't play it safe: “security” for men-loving-boys-loving-men is an illusion, as most of its contributors would no doubt agree. But if this welcome new venture is to take risks, the least it can count on is our practical support. □

Roger Moody is a writer living in London.

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# Heavy ruminations

## First Light

Peter Ackroyd

Grove Weidenfeld, New York, 1989  
\$19.95 cloth, 328pp.

Reviewed by Donald Stone

Of all the claims made for this book on its dust jacket, one does ring true: it is "full of suspense." As a group of archeologists begins to explore a newly revealed grave mound in Dorset, tension grows regarding the secrets hidden there and whether certain mysterious forces (felt, but not actually seen) will allow these secrets to be unearthed.

Unfortunately, *First Light* is also a book full of heavy rumination about time, reality and the universe. It stresses repeatedly that "Everything is touching everything else" and more subtly that humans read their meaning in the skies. Lest we miss the point, Ackroyd illustrates both ideas with his characters. Now unsuspected family ties and old friendships come to light, binding the most unlikely personalities; now other individuals seal their fate by projecting onto the heavens their own emptiness or religious conviction. Meanwhile, dreams, fables, and intriguing theories about past societies mingle with the mundane without too much to tell us how the pieces fit. (Or is the message that no one really knows how they fit?) Little wonder that Ackroyd peppers the drama with a few humorous moments. But they, too, are not without an annoying side.

The presence in *First Light* of, in particular, a lesbian couple and of Mr. Augustine Fraicheur gives the plot a good measure of comedy. Augustine loves camp, fabrics, gossip, antiques, and, we can be sure, boys. He also enjoys using *doubles entendres* with Evangeline and Hermione who fool no one as to their orientation, even though Evangeline insists on referring to her friend as "my assistant." Although Ackroyd's portrait of these individuals could not be called vicious, it is grounded in very tired stereotypes, a situation that the author does not improve upon when relegating his homosexual characters to a periphery of comic relief.

If Aunt Martha buys you a copy of the book for your birthday, reading it can't hurt. Some pages are funny; others are moving, but the whole remains heavy, contrived and expensive. □

Donald Stone teaches in Cambridge, Mass., as best he can.

# Healing Heart

Continued from page 7

part was written while Hull was a senior Fulbright lecturer from 1984-1986 in Jamaica. In contrast to the previous sections, the poetry here is less descriptive and more open and inviting. She writes of connections made in Jamaica that had been missed in the United States. Undoubtedly, spending time in an all-Black tropical environment was significant, as was her turning 40. Within this section is a wonderful poem, "At My Age," in which Hull attests to the power she has as a woman:

At my age  
now  
I have taken up dancing  
and lip gloss  
gone in for fashion  
and frivolity  
vamp my hair into flying sexiness...

Don't tell me — in other words —  
about your fears of growth and change

The work throughout this part of *Healing Heart* describes a rebirth in the metaphors of light, intense color, delicious fruits, and the sounds of the natural elements. There is a brashness, confidence and freshness in the work, in contrast to the more muted first segments.

Finally, the "Healing Heart" section breaks open in a strong, nurturing, self-assured voice as Hull completely abandons — to this reader's relief — the self-containment in the first part of the book. Apparently, she has seen all her demons and has decided that she will live with them and triumph. In "The Way It Is (Right Now)," the poet says:

The next one who tastes  
what I've been holding  
is going to get their head blown off!

It's that deep  
that sweet and real,  
a straight shot all the way  
to so much love  
so much to give  
that...

I can't even talk about it.

And she has found a good, loud anger in  
"Dumping Harry Claggett":

So this low-lifed motherfucker  
is still humping inside me  
swelling my belly with fibroid tumors  
raising up headaches behind my opening  
eyes —  
the nastiest piece of shit  
I want to dump today.

Gloria Hull rocks herself, pats herself gently, hugs herself, loves herself, and anyone who wants that for themselves will indeed get closer to it with *Healing Heart*. Though her journey to self-fulfillment is far from finished, she is perhaps more fearless in facing the future than many of us. At least, it seems that way in *Healing Heart*. □

Terri L. Jewelle is a Black Lesbian Feminist writer/poet compiling material for a Black Lesbian literary anthology and an anthology about Black women with dreadlocks.

# Zombie

Continued from page 9

was played at his funeral last year when he died of AIDS at age 31.

*The Zombie Pit* was the perfect antidote to my disappointment in Mr. Prince. In fact, it was the perfect bridge to two other books I had read recently, Freddie Greenfield's *Were You Always a Criminal?* and Armistead Maupin's *Sure of You*. As druggy/trippy as Freddie and as right-on-the-money with small details of everyday life as Armie, D'Allesandro's work recorded what life on the edge was like for him in the '80s.

Like every other poet who shifts focus to prose, D'Allesandro's fiction has a lyrical quality. But unlike lots of poets, he wrote prose really well. In "Giovanni's Apartment," new love and lust becomes all-consuming:

A month later he's everything. Everything about him is too good; the body, the apartment, the silence. The calm he puts inside of me like one long continuation of the feeling I had as I sank into his mattress that first night — that was just a small taste of what Giovanni could be for me. Something important, primal, needed. He treated the animal side of me with the same care and nourishing a mother lavishes on a baby.

In different hands D'Allesandro's subject matter could have been twisted into a "sex and love addicts" guilt-ridden confessional tract.

Sex and obsession are the primary motivators in *The Zombie Pit* but just like real life, they don't preclude insights about other aspects of life. One of the last images in the book comes from the story "1960," in which D'Allesandro recalls being four years old and living "in this incredibly compartmentally ugly LA suburb" and realizing just how cruel people can be:

One day my sister went to a Barbie Beauty Contest at Brownies. The most beautiful Barbie Doll would be crowned queen of all the other Barbies. My sister came home crying with her poor Barbie in its little Barbie wedding dress jammed into a sack. My mother tried to calm her down and find out what was the matter. What was the matter was that all the other girls had told my sister that her Barbie was the ugliest of all. How she cried. Later she would become a beautiful woman — picture a powerful, successful executive who makes lots of money — but that hadn't happened yet. For now she just cried and cried.

D'Allesandro was particularly adept at that kind of flash-forward-then-backward-all-the-hell-over-the-place kind of narrative and like a tourist following a well-seasoned guide, you never lose track of the line. The sad fact, however, is that *The Zombie Pit* is like a great big broken promise — filled with examples of a writer who was honing his skills to a razor sharp point — but ends up another stiletto dulled by the epidemic. (How depressing it is to realize that calling a short story "Giovanni's Apartment" was less an act of hubris than a potential prediction of the future. As time went on D'Allesandro might have played in James Baldwin's league, developing volumes of writing that would have been "important, primal, needed.") Still, there's a lot of craft to enjoy in *The Zombie Pit*. I mean, what's not to love about a writer brave enough to start a one paragraph mini-story ("Walking To The Ocean This Morning") with the line "The truth of the matter is I like to be beaten and then fucked like a dog."? □



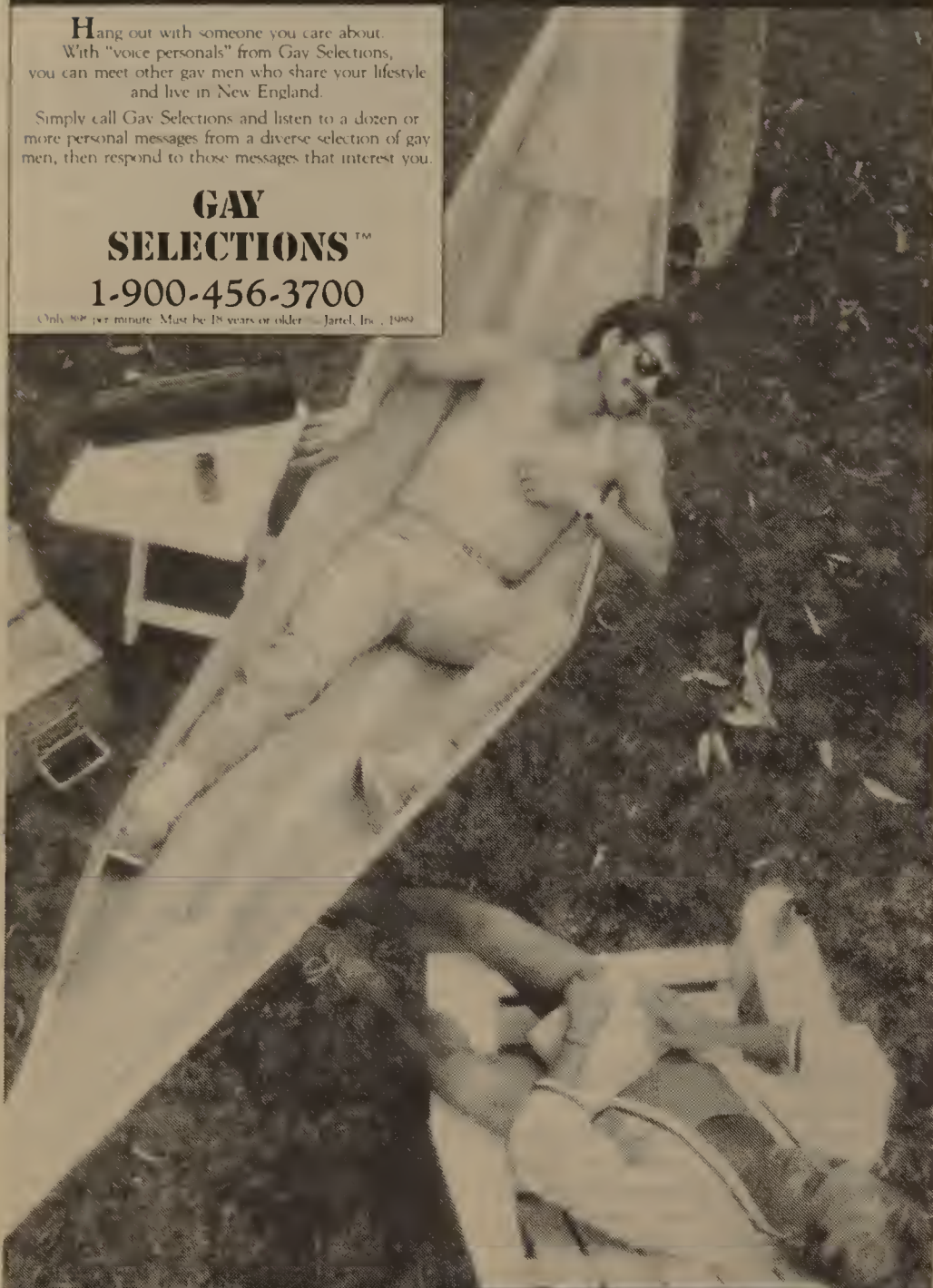
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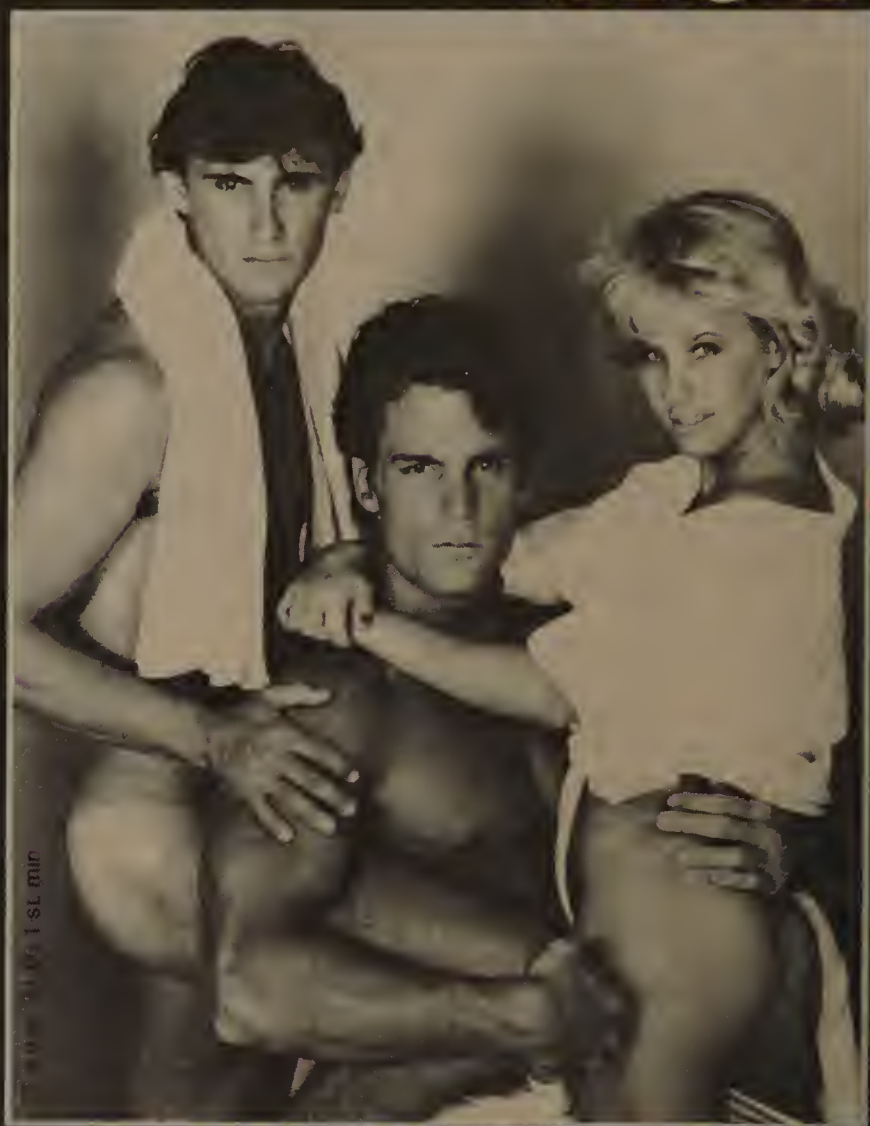


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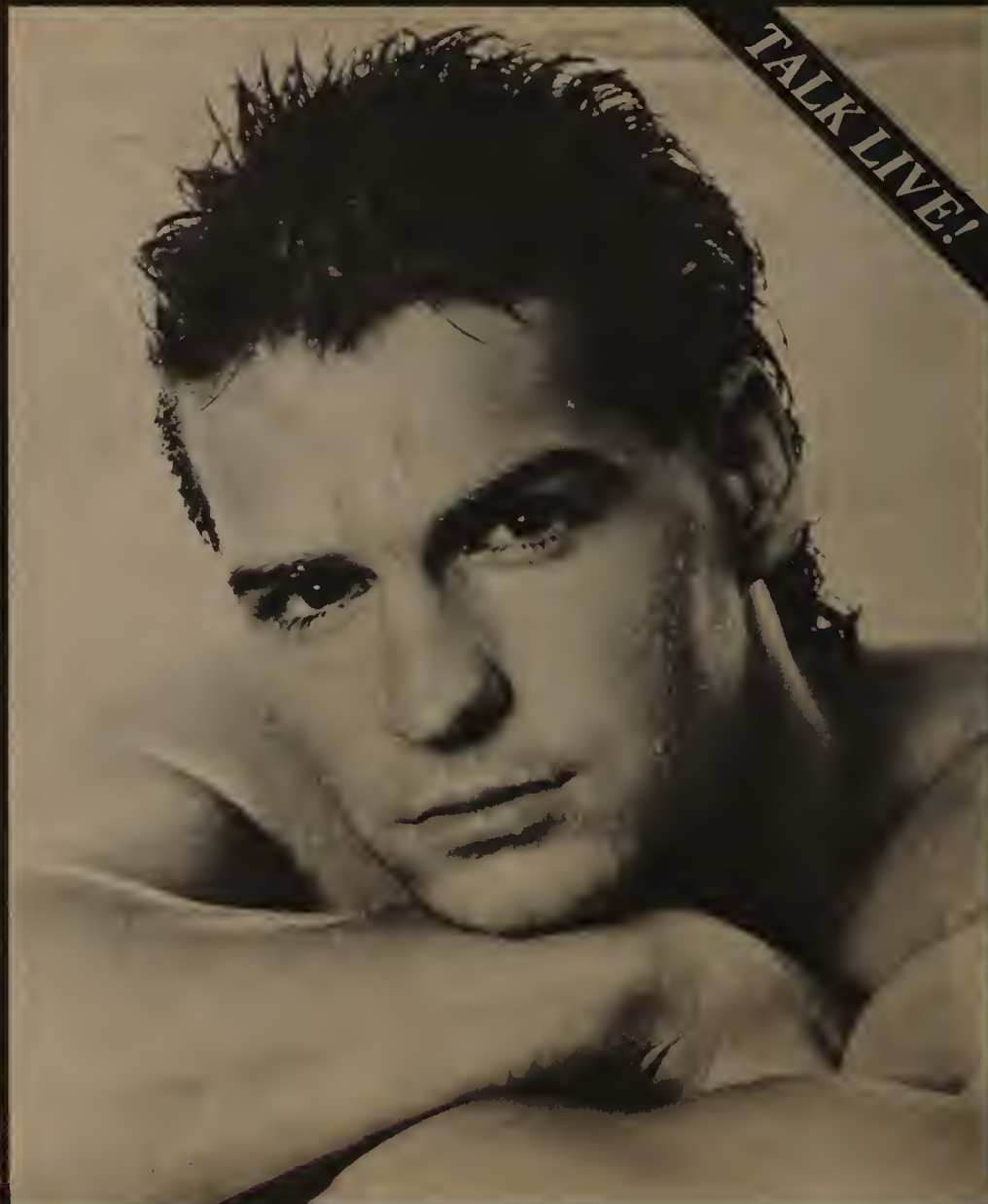
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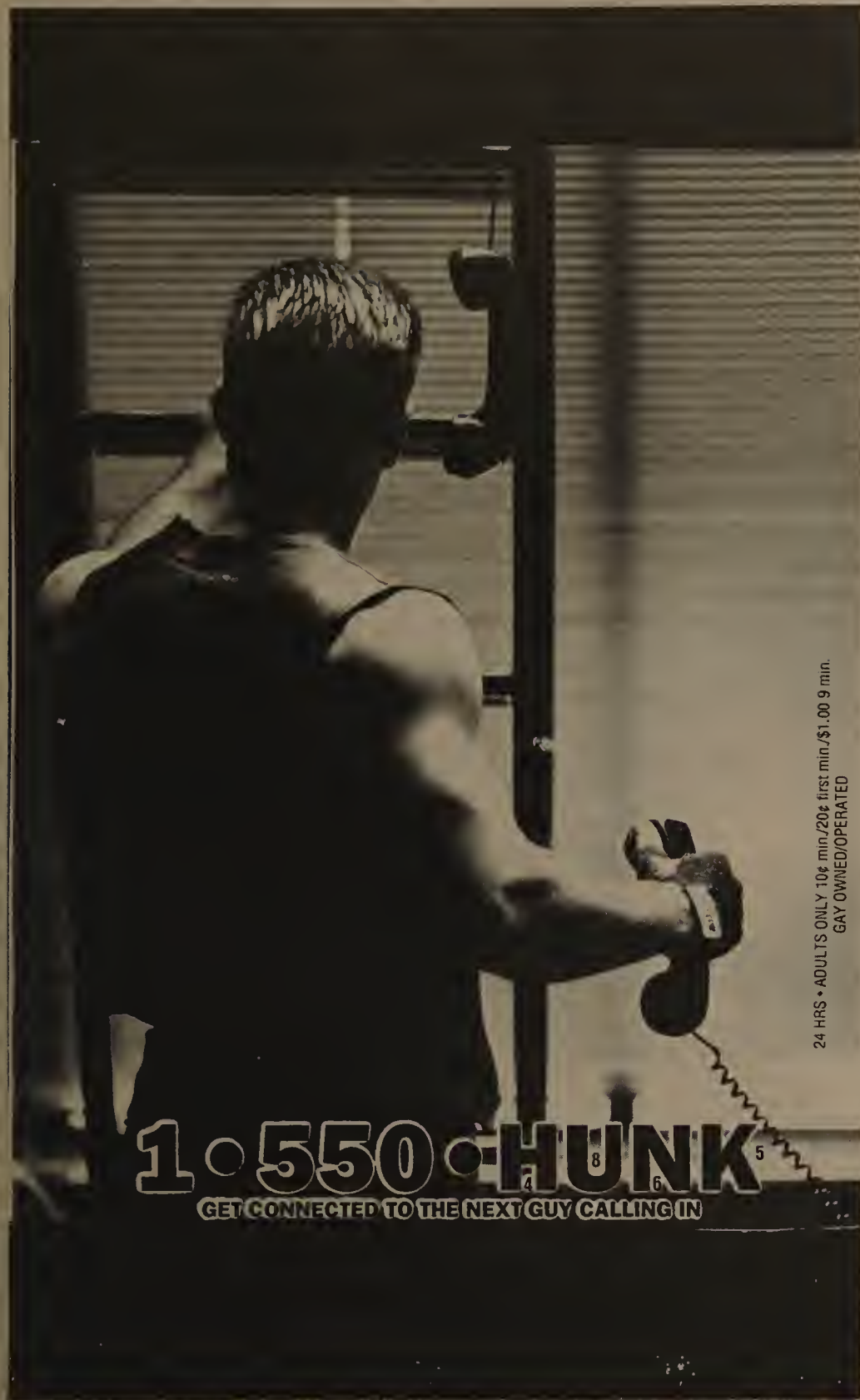
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## Big Mama

Continued from page 9

undeniably about the women and their reactions to one another. Evidence of this can be found in the titles alone: "An Independent Woman"; "The Blues Ain't Nothin But a Good Woman Feelin Bad"; and "Did My Mama Like To Dance?" which tells the sour-sweet moment in which the narrator learns about her dead mother's life:

All she had was love and that don't feed hungry children. She left here and went up North.... Your Big Mama and Aunt Mae felt like it was they fault she died on that dance floor, fell out from a brain tumor, washing away her dreams.

In the final, affirming piece, "They Tell Me...Now I Know," the girlchild narrator begins menstruation, thus undergoing her rite of passage into womanhood. The women of *The Big Mama Stories* reunite in celebration of her maturation, offering gifts and rituals meant to maintain the sanctity of "women's ways" and the will to survive a hostile world. The key to the unity of women is the blood which ties the life-force of the planet to the many, many generations previous and yet to come.

I was given my name and invited into the circle of women, no longer a lil girl.... All the stories they had told me were gifts, all the love more precious than gold. They tell me...now I know.

And Shay Youngblood has shared the gift of stories with the reader along with a profoundly effective talent for the telling. Her *Big Mama Stories* ask us to find our own circles of nurturance and strength, and to share our hardest lessons drawn from the struggle and the victory within our lives. □

## Moons of Mars

Continued from page 9

Schwartz's characters come to grips with a wide variety of issues: incest, domestic violence, dysfunctional families and relationships, internal and external homophobia, broken hearts, busted marriages — even lesbian bed death. Two extremes of coming out experiences are explored: a teenage girl's first lesbian love affair ("Jessie") and a longtime couple's first peek outside the closet ("The Unveiling"). By and large, however, the women here grapple with the general problems of the human condition.

Two of the most compelling stories — "Rosalie," a reminiscence of school girl betrayal complete with cootie catchers and a Machiavellian clique — and the title piece, a superb dissection of family dynamics, are about straight women. Even in specifically lesbian stories, straight people are fully explored. Unlike many lesbian authors who keep biological families invisible, or at the best one-dimensional, Schwartz focuses a keen eye on parents and other relations.

While the bulk of the book is written with grace and skill, Schwartz occasionally stumbles when describing the lesbian community. Attempts at ambience are a little heavy-handed, and one can sometimes sense the tinkering behind the scenes — in contrast, for example, to the seemingly effortless prose of the title story. (Schwartz notes in her acknowledgments that this piece was dashed off "as a free writing exercise in 90 minutes and never substantially changed.")

Schwartz appears weaned on potlucks and consciousness-raising groups, and a strong feminist bent follows through most of this work. Politics can be difficult to blend into fiction, appearing as crudely attached veneer or apologetic afterthought, but within the pages of this book issues like poverty, class privilege, elitism, and "activism as narcotic" are deftly woven into the fabric of the whole.

Among Schwartz's many professional hats is that of poet, and her skill with meter and imagery carry through into her prose. For example, in "Winter Apples," the protagonist recalls, "Midwinter, I found myself in a middle-sized, non-descript city of mediocre opportunity." "Power Failure" describes "the city our town leaned against." Schwartz clearly revels in language, though in no place does form obscure function.

Despite its title, *The Names of the Moons of Mars* is a down-to-earth exploration and chronicling of our lives as women. It stands up, thanks to careful sequencing, just as well for a self-indulgent reading feast as for a series of quickie encounters. File this under "must read." □

*Nan Donald is a local musician and writer who wonders as always at this time of year why she ever left her home in Florida.*

## Adoption

Continued from page 3

urgent need for foster homes for children born with HIV. The couple contacted the DSS in March of 1987 and applied for licensing to provide foster care on an emergency basis. Although the licensing process normally takes three to six months, according to Pavlik, the couple had their first foster child in May of that year. Pavlik said she and Jessen provided care for three healthy children before Erik came to live with them.

Pavlik said Erik was very sick when he came to live with her and Jessen. Unlike the other foster children who were placed with the couple on an emergency basis and eventually went to long-term foster homes, Erik was not expected to live long enough to be placed on a long-term basis. "The unsaid thing," according to Pavlik, "was 'You're going to have him until he dies.'"

But Pavlik said Erik responded positively to the care and nurturance she and Jessen provided, and gradually grew stronger and healthier. As he became healthier, Erik's status with Pavlik and Jessen went from an emergency placement to a long-term one. Erik's birth mother died when he was four months old, and according to Pavlik, his birth father "has been fully supportive," of Erik's living with Paulik and Jessen. "He terminated his parental rights — in his mind — on the condition that Erik stays with us," said Pavlik, who added that the birth father occasionally visits with Erik.

Pavlik said it was actually a DSS case worker who suggested the couple consider adopting Erik. The case worker and other DSS workers who had individual contact with the couple were "fully supportive and wonderful," said Pavlik.

But the DSS administration, in enforcing its pro-marriage policy, has not been so supportive. When asked about the mixed messages given by DSS, Pavlik said they were "frustrating to say the least." She said she and Jessen had jointly applied for a foster care license and jointly signed the emergency placement agreement and agreement to convert to long-term care. When the women jointly applied to adopt, according to Pavlik, "the county said 'you can't do this jointly.'" When the couple asked why all the other agreements with DSS had been jointly approved, Pavlik said the response was "The policy only speaks against adoption."

The women decided to push for a joint adoption, even though it meant the DSS would issue a negative recommendation in its report to the judge. In her comments at the November press conference, NCLR executive director Roberta Achtenberg said "The [DSS] pretends that children's best interests can only be served when a certain family model is in place. The court saw through that pretense and gave Erik in law what he had in fact — two parents."

Pavlik told *GCN* that she, Jessen and Erik live a family life that is not unusual. "The only difference is that we spend a lot of time with doctor's visits," said Pavlik, adding that Erik's HIV treatment program includes AZT and gamma globulin, both of which involve close medical monitoring.

"Erik is a healthy child who happens to be infected with HIV," said Pavlik. "He just had a pediatric visit today and there's nothing wrong with him other than his blood count's a little off." She said that like many parents, she and Jessen "expect Erik to grow up to be President, or something else." □

## Church

Continued from page 1

Some members of the gay and lesbian community also expressed concern about the demonstration. A. Damien Martin, founder of the Hetrick-Martin Institute, said the action was not representative of "mature people in a mature movement." And the Gay Men's Health Crisis issued a press release that expressed "sympathy" with the protesters, but criticized the demonstration, saying "the action shifted public attention from the real issues raised by Cardinal O'Connor's damaging positions and actions on AIDS. For that reason alone, we feel that the action by ACT UP and WHAM inside St. Patrick's Cathedral was a mistake."

Supporters of the action say the necessity of the separation of church and state were the motivating factors behind the demonstration. "Cardinal O'Connor is involved in city politics every time he speaks

Continued on page 15



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NEW YEARS EVE TIX NOW ON SALE

## Lesbian

Continued from page 3

woman' and not expected to have much sense anyway, but it won't forgive you if you're a man," she said.

Officially, the revolutionary government in Nicaragua has no discriminatory or protective policy toward lesbians and gay men. Marta said that when Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega was asked about Sandinista policy by a group of internationalists, including a gay man from San Francisco, he said that "there's no repression here of lesbians and gay men — no one would lose their job here because they were lesbian or gay." Marta laughed as she recounted this, because she said that, of course, lesbians and gay men do lose their jobs for that reason. She added however that Ortega's statement is a "point of entry."

In describing her coming out process, Marta said that when she was a child, she played doctor with another girl as a child, but that she found a boyfriend when she was older. "I knew I felt more attraction to women," she said, "but I just didn't have any avenues."

After being arrested and tortured by the National Guard, Marta went to Mexico, where she had been granted political asylum. She returned to Nicaragua and became a guerilla with the FSLN (the Sandinistas) on the Southern front. "Afterwards, when I was 23, I was in Matagalpa, continuing the work, when I met a woman who already had experience [with women]. That was my first serious relationship," Marta said.

"I wanted to die. I wanted to get out of the world — just loving a woman."

Marta also talked about her relationship with another Nicaraguan woman which led to hostile reactions from some of the FSLN revolutionaries in her area.

"They were having an evaluation to see if she could become a *militante* [a rank within the FSLN]. There's one moment in the evaluation where they assess 'moral qualities.' One woman of about 50 said, 'she can't be a *militante*, she likes women. She maintains immoral relations.'"

"It was interesting — one male *militante* said 'here, we're talking about qualities as a revolutionary.' And in the end she was awarded the militancy. But even that didn't resolve her situation, because she was subject to harassment."

Finally, Marta's lover could not stand the stress of having to hide anymore and she broke off the relationship.

"I was heartbroken. We haven't seen each other for 6 years, and I still miss her. Now, she's going out with a man," Marta said.

"In Nicaragua, the lesbians I know are immersed in feminist groups, and in political struggle. One of my concerns is that here [in the U.S.], from what I have seen, a lot of lesbians don't have a connection to political struggle," she said, adding, "To me it seems like a lot of lesbians here feel that their problems are resolved when they personally, as individuals, have a lover, a lesbian bar to go to, a lesbian or feminist bookstore, a nice place to live and a decent job. To me this is a very limited vision. Not what I would consider the struggle of a community." □

## Atlanta

Continued from page 1

mit the distribution of these materials on the grounds that they are implicitly condoning illegal acts. So these laws have definite life and death implications."

The January 8 action, according to Siff, will be a march and rally to the state capitol. Themes for the event include "If the government won't stay out of our beds, we'll bring our beds to the government," and "Sodomites in suits." The action will also include civil disobedience, although organizers gave few specifics about what kinds of actions protesters might undertake in risking arrest.

If activists are actually arrested on January 8, they will be released from jail by the next day's actions, which will target the CDC. This action will include a legal picket, as well as civil disobedience, and is intended to focus attention on the CDC's role in defining AIDS and ARC. As the nation's official epidemiology center, the CDC has developed the guidelines used by doctors and other health officials to diagnose cases of AIDS and ARC.

"While the CDC says there are about 100,000 people who have AIDS or ARC, according to the medical profession there are

close to two million people who have HIV disease," said Siff. ACT UP is targeting the CDC since it is the federal agency that "defines for social service agencies, insurance companies, and others, what AIDS is," she said.

Siff added that she was excited that the group had chosen to organize the sodomy action "as an issue of lesbian and gay rights," as opposed to a "privacy issue." She also said she hoped the groups and constituencies brought together by the two actions will become more aware of each other's issues. For example, she said, the reproductive rights activists who come out to support the sodomy repeal effort might not necessarily know that much about the CDC's role in the AIDS epidemic. And similarly, AIDS activists who are knowledgeable about the CDC may have their consciousness raised about sodomy laws.

Chip Rowan, who described himself the "gorgeous, action facilitator" for ACT UP/Atlanta, said he was shocked by the numbers of individuals and groups who have said they will come to Atlanta. ACT UP/New York, which Siff said has "provided us a lot of assistance," is planning to send a large contingent to both actions. In addition, according to Rowan, activists from all over the South and from both coasts have said they are planning to attend.

Organizers said they are working to raise money to subsidize travel expenses for activists who want to attend the Atlanta actions but can't afford to go. For information about the actions, contact ACT UP/Atlanta at (404) 873-1097.

□ filed from Boston

## AIDS report

Continued from page 3

This fear was echoed by the new executive director of the National AIDS Network, Eric Engstrom. "People are tired about hearing about AIDS. They're tuning it out much the same way people began to tune out coverage of the Vietnam war. We need to keep pushing people to understand that the issues AIDS raises affect the entire community, not just people with AIDS."

Eve Faber, who coordinated Washington's commemoration of World AIDS Day on Dec. 1 where Sheridan, Engstrom and 76 others were arrested for civil disobedience, said indifference can be challenged by grassroots organizing. "We don't make legislative changes — broad-based social change — from the top down. We only make them when you have a mass movement behind things."

The Commission listed five initial steps to begin solving problems of health care delivery:

- recognize that a crisis situation exists in many cities;
- create a "flexible, patient-oriented, comprehensive" care system;
- consider opening regional centers for HIV care;
- create units that treat people who have both HIV infection and drug addiction; and
- provide comprehensive care under one roof.

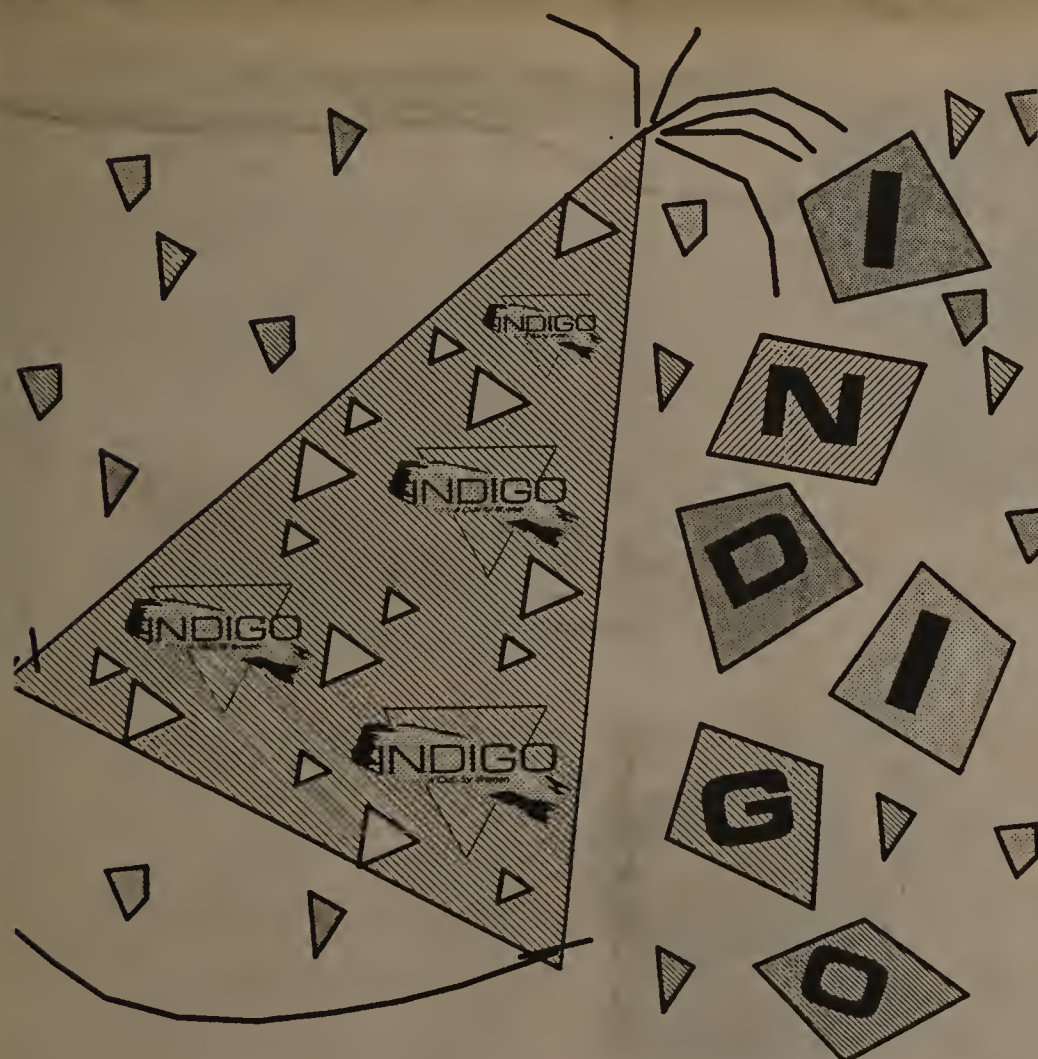
Sheridan faulted the Bush Administration for an underfunded and uncoordinated AIDS national policy and especially in light of his handling of national disasters. "You're hard put not to make comparisons to the way the President and the country responded to Hurricane Hugo and the San Francisco earthquake, when you look at a need to provide services and care when a disaster strikes." □

## Church

Continued from page 13

against the teaching of safe sex," ACT UP member Chip Duckett told *GCN*. "He was also a member of the President's HIV Commission. Why is a member of the clergy appointed to a political post? Why are his views, which are the result of church dogma, valid in the political realm?"

Liz Tracey, also of ACT UP, called the Church's support of Operation Rescue the "height of hypocrisy. Since when are the very tactics which Operation Rescue uses against a legally protected choice immoral when used by others?" Tracey added, "Does the simple fact that we are in disagreement with them condemn us to hell?" □



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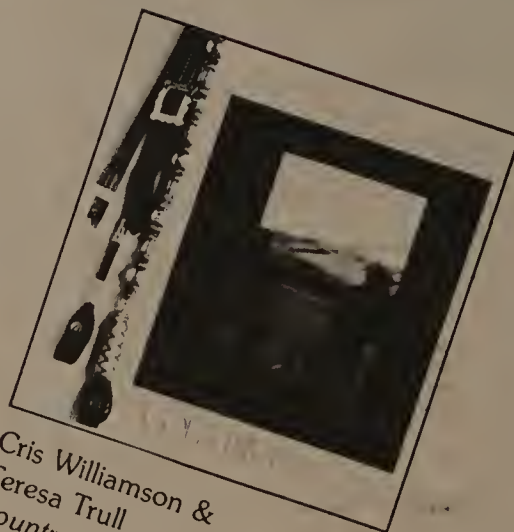
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## GAY COMMUNITY NEWS □ DECEMBER 17-23, 1989 □ PAGE 17



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## OPERATORS STANDING BY

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2LF need 3rd for Victorian in Newtonville. 1/2 acre yard on bus lines. Share entire house. Your bdrm is entire 3rd floor with 1/2 bath. \$350 plus. 965-0648. CHEM FREE A MUST. (23)

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# Prisoners Seeking Friends

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## Thank You!!!

To those of you prisoners who responded to Kristy's request for a donation of a couple bucks or some stamps to GCN to help the prisoner project. THANKS!

KRISTY — an inspiration to my life. She believes in treating people the way you want to be treated. Love, Silas



**Prisoners: Write Letters to the Editor!** Here are some 'alternative' newspapers. Write some of them about how prison and racism and homophobia and money work together (against you!). They may print your letter, they may not. But these are papers that consider themselves 'different' and may help you get the word out. GO FOR IT!

- \* THE SHADOW, PO Box 20298, New York NY 10009
- \* THE WIRE, PO Box 73861, Washington DC 20056
- \* FIFTH ESTATE, PO Box 02548, Detroit MI 48202
- \* NORTHERN SUN NEWS, 1519 E. Franklin Ave., Minneapolis MN 55404
- \* GREEN ACTION, Box 37, Tempe AZ 85281
- \* ZENGER, PO Box 3481, Madison WI 53704
- \* BAYOU LA ROSE, c/o Miller, 302 N. J St. No.3, Tacoma WA 98403
- \* LIVE WILD OR DIE, Box 13765, Portland OR 97213
- \* THE INNER CITY PRESS, Box 416 HUB Sta., Bronx NY 10455
- \* BAD NEWZ, c/o Sarris, 125 E. 23rd St (300), New York NY 10010
- \* SET FREE, c/o Dixon, 222 High St SE, Albuquerque NM 87102
- \* OVERTHROW, Box 392, Canal St Sta, New York NY 10013
- \* DIALOGUE, 916 Euterpe, New Orleans LA 70130
- \* REVOLUTIONARY ANARCHIST B. LEAGUE, Box 10854, Minneapolis MN 55458
- \* FACTSHEET FIVE, c/o Gunderloy, 6 Arizona Ave, Rensselaer NY 12144
- \* ANARCHY, c/o CAL, Box 1446, Columbia MO 65205
- \* RECON, Box U-14602, Philadelphia PA 19134
- \* THE CITY SUN, 44 Court St, Brooklyn NY 11201
- \* LISTEN REAL LOUD, c/o AFSC, 1501 Cherry St, Philadelphia PA 19102
- \* PORTLAND FREE PRESS, 333 SE 3rd Ave, Portland OR 97214
- \* PORTLAND ALLIANCE, 2807 SE Stark St, Portland OR 97214
- \* POST AMERIKAN, PO Box 3452, Bloomington IL 61702

Young male, clean shaven, handsomely built, lonely and need somebody to express myself with. Serious replies only. Timothy BETLER, 192-107, Box 45699, Lucasville OH 45699.

GM, doing life in Folsom, seeking friendship. I enjoy sexy and kinky love letters. My hobbies are pumping iron, sports, reading, writing and art. Lucky SOUZA, C-15595, Box 29 (Al-122), Represa CA 95671.

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I'm a gay lesbian female and would very much like to correspond with someone with a good sense of humor and sincere. I'm bilingual, born in Cuba and would be interested in a English or Spanish speaking (writing) penpal. I love music, sports and the outdoors. Deisy MORALES, W-26290 Rm 216 SHU, Frontera CA 91720.

I'm 25, and my interests are writing stories and all sports. If you'd like to write, please do. Georgia WILLIAMS, 27519, Box 20610, Reno NV 89515



## STONES TO SMITHS

Penpal sought who will relate to me as another human being, not just a prisoner. I'm an avid reader, lover of music (Stones to Smiths) and of good movies. Interested in discussing social controversies and/or life in general. Not seeking financial assistance. No certain gender, age or race required. Peter O'ROURKE, 881177, Box 473, Westville IN 46391.

Bisexual male, into younger studs including 25 years old, and safe sex, would like someone to write to. Interested in age of consent laws here and in Mexico. Can't write other prisoners. James A. SAVAGE, 048436, Box B, Anamosa IA 52205.

29 yr old gay male seeking mail from anyone wishing to make a new friend. All SASEs answered. Photos appreciated, but not necessary. Am enjoying GCN very much! Danny BOWEN, PO Box C-20552, Old Folsom 3-B-27, Represa CA 95671

I was born in Miami, have lived in other states and moved to Houston in 1984. I'm 21 and have been gay since 9. I would like someone to write. Michael HAYES, 446929, Rt 2 Box 20, Midway TX 75852.

Hellow. I would like to write someone from your paper, which I enjoy reading. Someone who would be a longterm friend, not just write a letter and be gone. I'm a down to earth guy and have feelings too, and am still looking for a good friend. Mike GENTHNER, HCR 70 Box 428, Bucks Harbor ME 04618.

I'm a gay man, well educated, who loves to read, write, play chess and also enjoys cars, motorcycles, nature, animals and gardening. I need some friends. Mark JOHNSON, 866374, Box 473, Westville IN 46391.

Hispanic male, 29, seeking correspondence with effeminate Black or Hispanic males with intentions of home life and a one-to-one marriage. This is my second ad. All I got before were religious eccentrics. I'm for real! Can write prisoners ONLY with permission from authorities first. Cisco CARDEMAS, 87A 0337, Box 51, Comstock NY 12821.

I am looking for a romantic and intelligent mate. I'm Hispanic and Negro, my hobbies are jogging, writing poetry, and freaky movies. Please write. Herberto POSBY, 81502 BK 5, Star Rt Box 22-B, Tucker AR 72168.

I go by the name of 'Brown Sugar' and am a stone freak when it comes to having sex. I like to receive real freaky letters. I'm in Max. Security right now but will be out soon. Charles THORNTON, 047208, Box 900, Jefferson City MO 65102.

I would love to share my life with someone. I love the country, drawing and peace and quiet. Prefer effeminate Blacks but will answer all. Must be for real. Roger SANTAW, 123276, Box 100, Somers CT 06071.

I'm a leather crafter and would like to find someone to help sell my goods in the free world. If you have any ideas or connections, please write Marvin NOWELL, 427154, Box 16, Lovelady TX 75851.

I'm a 28 yr old gay male, half Spanish and half white. I'm very easy going with a good sense of humor. I like people and animals, reading and sports. Also like all types of music, except classical-opra. Ronnie LOPEZ, 519506, Rt 2 Box 20, MidwayTX 75852.

Black female impersonator ('Brandy'), looking for a man that is good looking with a big ass and a dick like his arms. I love to cook and keep house. Michael HOWARD, 188-929, Box 56, Lebanon OH 45036.







16 Saturday ☐ **BETTY**, back by popular demand, perform their unique style of acoustic pop at Indigo. 823 Main St., Cambridge. 7pm. \$10. Info: 497-7200.

Calendar listings must be received by the Monday before the week of the event. Photos encouraged. Please specify if event is/is not wheelchair accessible and/or sign language interpreted. Please use our format as a guide for listings and put each event on a separate sheet, if possible. Listings must be typed.

## 16 Saturday

**Boston** ☐ **A Clean and Sober Dance** for the lesbian and gay community. Sponsored by The Boston Sound Machine. 140 Clarendon Street, at the Y. 9pm-1am. \$5.

**New York City** ☐ **Casselberry-DuPree** perform in concert to benefit Brooklyn Women's Martial Arts. At the Borough of Manhattan Community College, 199 Chambers Street. 8pm. \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door. 718/788-1775.

**Boston** ☐ **The Boston Lesbian & Gay Service Center** hosts an evening of Lesbian Fun and Games. 338 Newbury Street. 7-10pm. \$2 donation. 247-2927.

**Maynard** ☐ **West of Boston Lesbians** holds its Annual Holiday potluck party. 6:30pm. For info: Janis or Cec at 508/386-7737 or write P.O. Box 292, Marlboro, MA 01752.

**Cambridge** ☐ **China: 1986** exhibit by local photo artist Tina Yee, at The Gallery at Indigo. Thru 12/31. 823 Main Street. For info: 492-7200

**Cambridge** ☐ **BETTY**, an acoustic pop trio perform at Indigo, 823 Main Street. 7pm. \$10. 497-7200.

**Boston** ☐ **Alliance of Massachusetts Asian Lesbian and Gay Men** presents the Radical Debutante Holiday Ball. Creative dress. 39 West Newton Street. 8pm. 499-9\$35.

**Boston** ☐ **Lesbian Moms and Kids Multi-Holiday Party** at the Arlington Street Church. Bring toy or book donation for the Child Care Room of Boston Living Center and food or drink to share. 12:30-5pm. Cindy, 267-0900(days).

## 17 Sunday

**Jamaica Plain** ☐ **Crones' Harvest**, presents lesbian singer/songwriter Laura Wetzler. 761 Center Street. 3pm. \$5. 983-9530, TTY-TDD 983-9529. Wheelchair accessible.

**Boston** ☐ **Boston Gay Men's Chorus** will perform at Jordan Hall, New England Conservatory. 3pm. \$18/\$14/\$9. Sign language interpreted.

**Boston** ☐ **Prime Timers**, an organization for older gay males holds its Christmas party at The Claddagh Restaurant, 335 Columbus Ave. 6pm. For info: D. Bourbeau, 266-8625.

## 18 Monday

**Boston** ☐ **Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Civil Rights** holds biweekly meeting at the Les/Gay Service Center, 338 Newbury Street. 8pm. Rich, 776-6956.

## 19 Tuesday

**Boston** ☐ **Boston Gay Men's Chorus** will perform at Jordan Hall, New England Conservatory. 8pm. \$18/\$14/\$9. Sign language interpreted.

**Boston** ☐ **Gay Fathers of Greater Boston** meets to discuss "Gay Fathers on Television." At the Lindemann Center, 25 Staniford Street, Revere Room. 8-10pm. 742-7897.

## 20 Wednesday

**Boston** ☐ **FCHC's Living Well Series**, Improving Health through Art with Jana Levenson. 338 Newbury Street. 6-8pm. Paul or Robb at 267-0900 to pre-register.

**Cambridge** ☐ **Say it, Sister!**, "Lesbian/Gay Civil Rights Bill — Celebration." WMBR, 88.1 FM. 7-8pm.

## 21 Thursday

**Boston** ☐ **GCN Production Night**. All welcome. Proofreading starts at 5pm. Paste-up after 7pm. 62 Berkeley St., near Arlington and Back Bay T-stops. Info, GCN: 617/426-4469.

**Boston** ☐ **Bridges** a gathering for remembrance and renewal for all people whose lives have been touched by AIDS. Sponsored by the AIDS Action Committee. At Fan-euil Hall. 7pm.

**Boston** ☐ **The Group**, a social/discussion group meets for a holiday party at the Les/Gay Service Center, 338 Newbury Street. 8pm. 266-1129.

**Jamaica Plain** ☐ **Crones' Harvest** presents lesbian feminist author Mary Daly. 761 Center Street. 7:30pm \$5. 983-9530, TTY-TDD 983-9529. Wheelchair accessible.

## 22 Friday

**Boston** ☐ **GCN Mailing**. Come help stuff the paper and meet new friends. 5-10pm. 62 Berkeley St., near Arlington and Back Bay T-stops. Info: GCN, 617/426-4469.

## 23 Saturday

**Jamaica Plain** ☐ **Crones' Harvest** holds potluck dinner and shows film "Born in Flames." 761 Center Street. 6pm. \$5. 983-9530, TTY-TDD 983-9529. Wheelchair accessible.

## 24 Sunday

**Boston** ☐ **Metropolitan Community Church** presents Lesbian and Gay Christmas Eve. 131 Cambridge Street. 6:30pm Pre-service Concert, 7pm Candlelight Service. 437-0420.

## 25 Monday

**Boston** ☐ **The Boston Lesbian & Gay Service Center** holds an open house with seasonal movies, music and hot cider. 338 Newbury Street. 1-6pm. Carol, 247-2927.

## 27 Wednesday

**Cambridge** ☐ **Say it, Sister!** "Women's Health" — Byllye Avery's keynote address at the Boston Midwifery Conference. WMBR, 88.1 FM, 7-8pm.

**Jamaica Plain** ☐ **Crones' Harvest** presents herbalist Gail Ulrich. 761 Centre Street. 8pm. \$5. 983-9530, TTY-TDD 983-9529. Wheelchair accessible.

## 28 Thursday

**Boston** ☐ **The Group**, a social/discussion group meets at the Les/Gay Service Center. Topic, "The Final Meeting of the Decade." 338 Newbury Street. 8pm. 266-1129.

**Boston** ☐ **Boston Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation** meets at the Les/Gay Service Center, 338 Newbury Street. 8pm. 868-0416.

## 29 Friday

**Boston** ☐ **Chiltern Mountain Club** snowshoe hiking in Baxter Park, Maine. Thru 1/1. Roy, 661-1436(before 9:30pm).

## 30 Saturday

**Cambridge** ☐ **Desert Hearts** at Indigo, 823 Main Street. 8pm. \$6.50. 497-7200.

## Weekly events

## Saturday

**Boston** ☐ **The Boston Area Rape Crisis Center** new training session for hotline. 617/492-RAPE.

**Boston** ☐ **Gay Boston**, with Jim Voltz. Boston Neighborhood Network, channels A3 and A8. 7:30-8pm.

**Boston** ☐ **Body Electric**: healing with group sensual massage for gay and bisexual men. 551 Tremont. 7:30pm. \$12. 522-9164.

## Sunday

**Boston** ☐ **Boston Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth (BAGLY)**. Open to youth age 22 and under. 35 Bowdoin St. 2-5pm. 523-7363 or 1-800-42BAGLY.

**Boston** ☐ **Metro Healing healing group** for everyone. Metropolitan Health Club aerobics room, 209 Columbus Ave. 7:30-9:30pm. 426-9205.

**Boston** ☐ **The Gay Dating Show**. WUNR 1600 AM. 10:30pm-2:30am. Lesbians and Gay Men.

**Boston** ☐ **ALATEEN Group** open to lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth, 22 and under. 338 Newbury Street, rm. 202k. 6pm-7:30pm. Dave, 629-2518 or Frank, 666-8912.

**Boston** ☐ **Metropolitan Community Church** meets for worship and fellowship at 131 Cambridge Street. 7pm. 437-0420.

## Monday

**Cambridge** ☐ **Healing Circle** group healing. 5 Upland Rd. 7:30-9:30pm. \$5 suggested. 864-1989.

**Cambridge** ☐ **Lesbian Rap**. 12/18 Alternative Celebrations, 12/25 no rap. Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 8-10pm. Free. 354-8807 (TTY/voice).

**Boston** ☐ **Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights** holds bi-weekly planning meeting. Les/Gay Service Center, 338 Newbury Street. 7pm. 776-6956.

## Tuesday

**Boston** ☐ **Gay Fathers of Greater Boston** meet 1st and 3rd Tues. of the month. Lindemann Ctr., 2nd fl. 8-10pm. 742-7897.

**Boston** ☐ **Gay and Lesbian Support Group for Adult Children of Alcoholics**. Faulkner Hospital. 8:30-10pm. Intake interview required. 522-5800 x1908.

**Boston** ☐ **Lesbian and Gay Freedom Trail Band**. No audition necessary. YWCA, 120 Clarendon St. 7:15pm. Kathy, 424-7025 or Gary, 267-6186.

**Providence, RI** ☐ **ACT UP/Rhode Island** open meetings. Rocket, 73 Richmond St. 7pm. 273-7228.

**Boston** ☐ **ACT UP/Boston** meets to confront the AIDS crisis. Gay and Lesbian Service Center, 338 Newbury Street, Rm. 203. 7pm. 49-ACT UP.

**Cambridge** ☐ **Bisexual Women's Rap**. 12/19 Ending a relationship and keeping a friendship, 12/26 no rap. Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 7:30-10pm. 354-8807.

**Cambridge** ☐ **30-plus Lesbian Rap** 7-8:30pm. 12/19 Therapy stories, 12/26 Movie. The Women's Center (see above).

**Cambridge** ☐ **Women For Sobriety**, a self help group for women recovering from addictions. Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 8-9:30pm. 354-8807

**Arlington** ☐ **Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays** meets on the second Tuesday of every month at First Parish Unitarian Church, 630 Mass. Ave. 7:15pm. Info: 547-2440 or 508/562-5807.

## Wednesday

**Boston** ☐ **Boston Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth**. Open to youth age 22 and under. 35 Bowdoin St. New persons' meeting 6pm; women and men meet separately 6:45-7:30; general meeting at 7:30pm. 523-7363 or 1-800-42BAGLY.

**Boston** ☐ **Bisexual Children of Alcoholics**. Mass. General Hosp., lower amphitheater 7:30pm. 259-1559.

**Cambridge** ☐ **Say it, Sister!** WMBR, 88.1 FM. 7-8pm.

**Boston** ☐ **Women's Self-Defense Classes** sponsored by Women's Self Defense Collective. Studio 3, 731 Harrison Ave., 2nd floor. 6-8pm. \$10-\$35 sliding scale per mo. 62S-1115.

**Cambridge** ☐ **Lesbian Al-Anon** with childcare. Women's Center (see above). 6:30-8pm.

## Thursday

**Northampton** ☐ **Valley Gay Alliance** meets 1st, 3rd Th. every month, basement of the Unitarian Church, 22 Main St. 7:30pm. 413/527-5310.

**Stoneham** ☐ **Incest Survivors Group** for women. New England Memorial Hospital, S Woodland Rd. 5-6:30pm. Sara Epstein, 979-7025.

**Cambridge** ☐ **Wise Woman Tradition Herbal Medicine and Women's Wisdom Classes**. Sliding scale. Whitewolf, 277-8232.

**Boston** ☐ **Boston Area Rape Crisis Center** drop-in group for women who have been raped. 492-RAPE.

**Cambridge** ☐ **Incest Survivors Group**. Women's Center (see above). 7:30-9:30pm.

**Cambridge** ☐ **Non-offending male sexual abuse survivors** group meets first Thursday of every month. Cambridge Ctr. of Commerce conference room, 859 Mass. Ave. 8:30-10pm. \$5 donation. 498-9881.

## Friday

**Worcester** ☐ **AIDS Project-Worcester support group** for HIV positive, PWAs, PWARCs, supporters. Open to all lesbians, gay men. 51 Jackson St. 7-9pm. Dana 508/755-3773.

**Boston** ☐ **Healing group** for everyone. Santa Fe Hair Salon, 528 Tremont St. 7:30-9:30pm. 426-9205.



# Lesbian sisters of yesteryear

*When I read about women who disguised themselves as men, I wonder...if I had been born 100 years ago, would I have tried this form of passing?*

**Selections from the Lesbian Herstory Archive.** On display at the New York Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center through December. Check viewing schedule hours at the Center: 212/620-7310. The Lesbian Herstory Archive can be contacted at P.O. Box 1258, New York, NY, 10116, 212/874-7232. The Archive has limited hours, but tries to accommodate requests. Any donations to the Archive's building fund should go to the Lesbian Herstory Educational Foundation, Inc. at the same address.

By Rachel Lurie

Lesbians can find out a lot about who we are by looking at who we've been. The 15-year-old Lesbian Herstory Archive is committed to documenting and bringing to life *our* stories — lesbian life in all its shapes and forms, throughout centuries and on all corners of the world. The material alone distances it from the stodgy realm of academia.

A show currently on display at the Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center in New York reflects the Archive's principle of accessibility by bringing to an open community space a range of samplings from the Archive's ever-growing collection.

Invited to put up the exhibit by the much newer National Museum of Lesbian and Gay History, which is essentially a project of



Tango on the rocks

the Center, a group of Archive members set to work culling choice pieces from the Archive treasure chest. Amy Beth, Polly Thistlewaite and Lucinda Zoe, with help from the Museum's Nancy Seaton, selected materials that entice viewers to learn more about the Archive itself and more about the organizations, people, or snippets of history displayed here.

The show does stand alone, however, putting forth lesbian history through representative collages, framed posters and other artifacts — for instance, who worked on a publication on display and when it was produced — in many cases those details aren't known even to the archivists. Reclaiming lost pieces of history comes in unexpected ways. A woman might walk into the show, see a flyer, and say "I was at that rally" and only then might the pieces come together.

The show is broken down to represent categories of the Archive's collection. There is a colorful "pulp novels" montage, with a dozen or so reproductions of covers from the trashy novels of the 1950s and '60s. In their heyday, these novels allowed the idea of lesbianism to cross over from urban to rural middle-America. The covers seem to have a formula: a scantily-clad woman leering at another woman hanging her head in shame. They seem designed to titillate while evoking the fear of "other." In fact, several of them were labeled as "human behavior" books with titles such as *Unnatural*, *Warped Women* and *Strange Fruit*. We can chuckle now at these books which mocked us, but I look at the covers and think about the dog-eared copies being passed clandestinely from hand to hand. And while hardly a boost for lesbian pride, the books were proof that lesbians *did* exist, if tragically misunderstood by the publishing industry (and the world at large). The sisters of yesteryear hungrily reached out for whatever they could get.

Other parts of the show also make me think about what life was like for the women who came before me. In a case are buttons from struggles gone by and I imagine the women who had the guts to wear pins proclaiming themselves "Lesbian Feminist" back at a time when a place like the Lesbian and Gay Community Center might have been based in a storefront instead of taking up half a city block, as it does now.

I look at the framed posters, their designs dated, with bubble letters my '80s eyes can barely read, etching out the time and place for a "women's only" dance. And I wonder, who were the women who went to that

dance? What did they wear? Where could the organizers hang such a poster anyway?

In looking at the "graphics" collage, I actually felt a chill when reading photocopies of newspaper stories, with datelines from London to Omaha, Nebraska — of women "discovered" after years of passing as men. Unlike the probably-judgmental readership for these articles generations ago, I don't roll my eyes and think of the "pervert" revealed, but wonder about every detail of that woman's life. If I had been born a hundred years ago, would I have tried this form of "passing?"

At the opening of the show on November 9, I watched two women scrutinize the "organizations collage," laughing as they pointed out groups they had been involved with. In the collage are flyers from groups ranging from the Lesbian and Gay Cuban Refugee Committee, to the Daughters of Bilitis, to San Francisco's Lesbian Feminist S/M Support Group (with a list of 18 different colored bandanas and what they signified). This too, is a tease, a sampling from an amazingly varied collection — both of organizational files which are there for the asking at the Archive, and there for the remembering, as part of our lesbian past.

The limited display space available for the show is an unintentional reflection of the space problem facing the Archive. Run for the past 15 years out of founder Joan Nestle's apartment, overtaken long ago by the richness of the Archives, parts of the collection are now housed in storage lockers. The Lesbian Herstory Education Foundation, the incorporated arm of the Archive, has been working to find a suitable spot as well to raise money for the move. Perhaps in this new space, there will be a permanent exhibition room, which, like this show, would first tease the visitor and then open up the door for further, absorbing exploration.

The show is dedicated to Mabel Hampton, a legend in the Black, and lesbian communities who lived in the apartment housing the collection and who died at the age of 87 just weeks before the show opened. □

Rachel Lurie lives in New York City.

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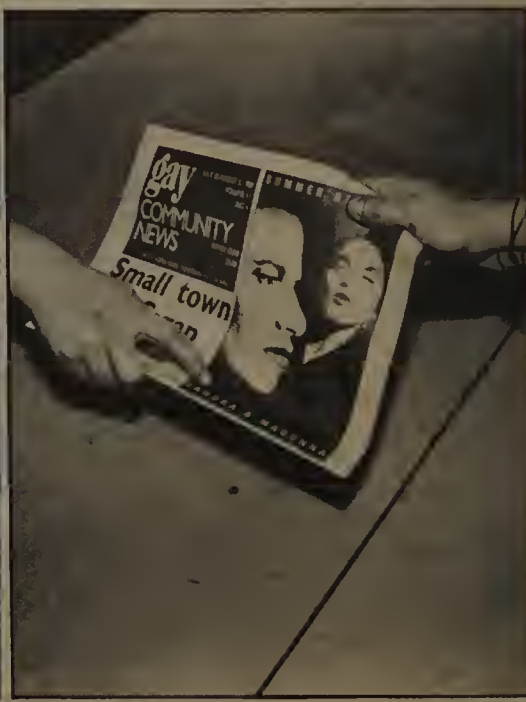
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